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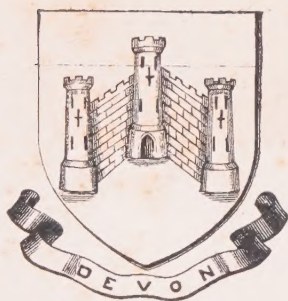
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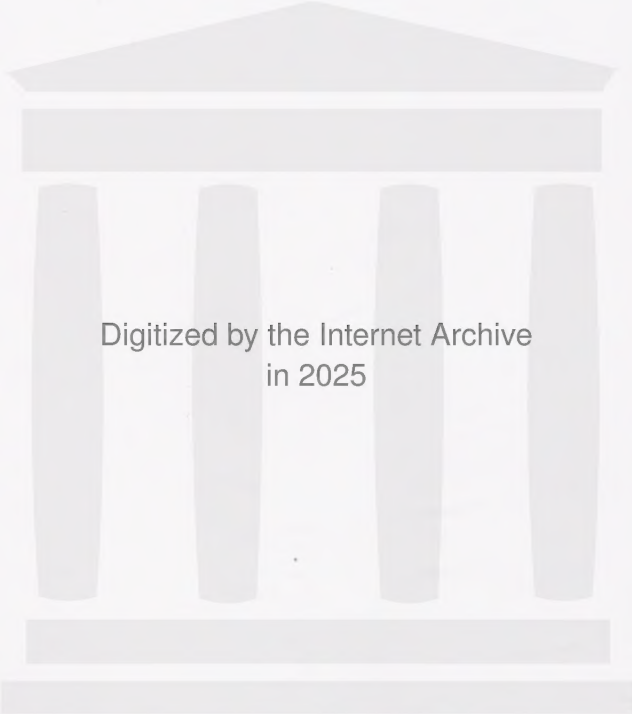
BY THE

Swansea Devonian Society.

H. A. LATIMER, President.

June 23 1908

BRIEF
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.



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BRIEF
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES
OF
BIBLE CHRISTIAN MINISTERS
AND LAYMEN.

With Portraits.

BY
WILLIAM JOHN MICHELL.

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.



THE BERESFORD PRESS, JERSEY.

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1906.

Printed by LABEY AND BLAMPIED,
at The Beresford Press, Jersey.

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INTRODUCTION.

ALTHOUGH forming but a very small portion of the vast and widespread communions bearing the name of Methodist, numbering in its fellowship only about thirty-two thousand souls, the Bible Christian Connexion, during its brief history, has produced from its ranks a number of men possessed of considerable intellectual ability and force of character. Judged according to its age, the conditions amid which it originated and developed, and the limited areas within which its principal triumphs have been achieved, the number of interesting personalities possessed by the denomination will compare favourably with those found in some of the larger religious organizations. And without exaggeration, it may be affirmed that, from its origin in the isolated and obscure parish of Shebbear, in the year 1815, to the present day, it has never been without men and women of deep spiritual earnestness, strength of will, and native mental ability. It is not exceeding the truth to say that within its ranks have lived and laboured men of spiritual genius—men who, had they been associated with other and larger communions, would have won widespread popularity, and have become national spiritual forces.

A man's origin and general environment are important factors in determining, if not the strength of his personality, yet the extent of his popularity, and the limits of his direct, personal influence. Some persons are well known because of their associations, and not because of any particular qualifications differentiating them from ordinary individuals. Amid other and different connections they would practically be unrecognised. Sarah has been immortalised by virtue of her association with Abraham. Intellectual ability and moral worth are not the only factors in determining the nature and extent of personal influence—social, political, and ecclesiastical forces must also be considered. In describing the evolution of character and the distribution of influence there must be recognition of two facts—the intellectual and other qualities resident within, and the environment in which those qualities are exercised and developed. Every man, however great, is limited in the exercise of his influence, not only by his native and acquired abilities, but by his personal associations and general environment. Every man, in truth, lives and exercises his gifts within a limited circle, and the dimensions of this circle are determined by manifold and complex conditions. Had some of the men, therefore, whose names are household words in Bible Christian Methodism, been born and educated amid other conditions—had Providence cast their lot among some of the great religious communions, it is impossible to doubt that their names would be as familiar as are some of the names honoured in Methodism to-day. This certainly is true of such men as William O'Bryan,

James Thorne, William Reed, Frederick William Bourne, and others.

The simple fact that Bible Christian Methodism exists, that its influence extends to such distant places as Canada, Australia, Africa, and China, and that its power for serving the highest and best interests of humanity was never greater than at present, is sufficient proof that it has embraced men of striking mental ability and spiritual worth. For religious, social, or political institutions, having ethical and humanitarian aims, are not established and developed by accident or chance, neither are they the creation of sincere but misguided zealots. At the back of every useful political or religious organization are generous impulses, governed and controlled by intelligent purpose. Written upon the great heart of humanity with ink invisible is the truth that the best blessings of life are the gift of pure, sanctified souls, and are the natural product of sweat of brow, of brain, or of soul. And this applies to religious institutions as well as to intellectual, moral, and spiritual benefits. It is pre-eminently true of the Bible Christian Connexion, and of its sainted men and women, who “counted not their lives dear unto themselves, so that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God” in the dark and neglected parts of the earth. Of those ministers who lived and laboured and practised the art of self-denial during the first fifty years of the Connexion’s history it is only just to say that they were a noble band of workmen—brave, and true, and strong: and in “The Bible

Christians—their Origin and History,” the late Rev. F. W. Bourne has written an interesting and sympathetic account of their struggles, conflicts, and triumphs. But in the originating and moulding and developing of the denomination there are some names which stand out with conspicuous prominence—names which may be found on the lips of every loyal, intelligent, and faithful member of this small but vigorous community. Some of them emerged from obscure places, but it is not improbable that their very obscurity provided some of the essential conditions for the development and perfecting of many of those qualities which enabled them to accomplish such heroic tasks. To the superficial observer, it appears incredible that genius or distinguished talent can trace its origin to Nazareth, but a deeper penetration cannot fail to discover that from the obscure Nazareths of the world have come some of the finest fruits of intellect and soul.

In the history of the Connexion the name of Daniel Evans stands out prominently as representing one of the great factors in the creation of the denomination. Entering the parish of Shebbear in the spring of 1813, Mr. Evans, in his first sermon in the parish church, made a profound impression on many minds, as in a clear, sonorous voice he expatiated on the nature, and enforced the necessity, of the new birth. His own heart stirred to its very depths, he was the instrument of quickening the hearts of the people of Shebbear as they had never been quickened. The labours of Mr. Evans in awakening the souls of men and women at Shebbear were followed and

supplemented by the heroic and devoted service of William O'Bryan, who is regarded as the honoured instrument employed by God in founding the Bible Christian Connexion. The third name is that of James Thorne, of honoured memory—a great soul, endowed with wonderful gifts of intellect and heart, used ungrudgingly in the service of humanity. Around these names gather the sacred traditions of the earlier years of the denomination, and to them must be ascribed the honour of creating and directing those specific religious forces which have assisted to sweeten and enrich the lives of tens of thousands of men and women in Cornwall and Devon, Somerset and Kent, the Scilly Islands, the Isle of Wight, Jersey and Guernsey, Canada, Australia, and China.

Now whilst honouring to the utmost those who served the Connexion during the first half of its history, the tendency to glorify the past must not blind one to the virtues and excellences of those who during later years have sought to deepen and expand denominational life and work. The labours of “the fathers,” therefore, having been recorded in Mr. Bourne’s History of the Connexion, the purpose of this and a succeeding volume is to present, in barest outline, the lives and labours of some ministers and laymen who have assisted in the development and expansion of the denomination, and in the spread of Christ’s Kingdom in England, Australia, and China.

Although one hears now and again a sigh and a prayer for the spirit and presence of “the fathers,” there are not a few sufficiently optimistic to believe that all the good men are not dead—that there are

still among the living men of "light and leading," of spiritual perception and of sane judgment, who can honourably sustain the reputation already won by their predecessors. Whilst conscious of the debt of gratitude owing to those who have lived and laboured, and have passed up the covert way into fuller life and light, one is led to believe that "the best is yet to be" — that the average Christian minister and worker of the Twentieth Century will, in mental culture, spiritual outlook, breadth of view, sympathy with the manifold forms of religious belief, and the power of adapting himself to the varying conditions of his time, be equal if not superior to the average minister of the Nineteenth Century. If there be any truth in the doctrine of mental and spiritual evolution, and if it be true that "through the ages one increasing purpose runs," the inference is not illogical that the days that are to be will be creative of better men, nobler institutions, healthier conditions of existence, and a stronger ethicised conscience.

Nature has been travailling in pain through the ages to bring forth *men*, and although many varieties have been produced, and even the choicest still retain some of the remnants of their ancestors of the cave and the forest, the latest of Nature's offspring, in physical and moral beauty, religious perception, spiritual intuition, and in power of adaptation to environment, are far in advance of her earlier products. And this is the law of her working, and must continue to be, if the conception of the "goal of the human race" possesses any moral meaning or spiritual significance. Whatever may be involved in the phrase "reversion to type,"

there is abundant evidence to show that man is in the making, and that surely, if slowly, he is being fashioned after the Ideal Man. By the varied processes of experience—by education, social fellowship, contact with the best and highest—by spiritual vision, moral friction, and dreams of the altitudes attainable but not yet attained—by the appropriation of those spiritual influences which have their source in the great heart of the Eternal Father, and which are never far distant from the most alienated soul—man is still climbing, working out the beast, and letting the ape and tiger die. Still fresh and true is the vision—and full of consolation and encouragement to those who, disposed to reflect unduly on the idiosyncracies, moral twists, and spiritual poverty of men, hang their harps upon the willows, and allow the music of hope to vanish from their lives—still true it is that “it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Grateful for “the fathers,” who by their devotion assisted in the creation of conditions far more favourable to self culture and spiritual development than those which they themselves inherited, one is not less grateful for “the sons,” who are demonstrating their value in many spheres, and worthily exhibiting many of the same excellent qualities which have been the determining human factors in denominational growth and expansion. Writing of the denomination in relation to Methodist Union, the late Mr. Bourne declared “that if, in the Providence of God, we are to maintain for awhile our separate existence, such are the zeal

and ability of our ministers, the increasing number, growing attachment, and fast accumulating resources of our supporters, that from every point of view we are better prepared to do so than ever before."

I am under many obligations to friends for assistance in producing this volume. Whilst most of the sketches are from my own pen, I am indebted for others to several brethren, whose initials will be found attached to their work. Originally it was intended to issue the sketches in one volume, but when about one-half had been printed it was considered that a single volume would be unusually heavy, and that it would be more convenient to issue the work in two volumes.

W. J. M.

*11, Roserille Street, Jersey,
May, 1906.*





REV. P. W. BOERSK.



REV.

FREDERICK WILLIAM BOURNE.

—

AT the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century there entered upon his probation, as a minister of the Bible Christian Connexion, a young man who was destined to play a part probably unexcelled by any other person, not excluding the direct founders of the denomination : for whilst to originate implies in many instances genius, insight, and a gift of organization, the ability to consolidate, to guide, to lay down and work upon principles adapted to the particular environment in which they are to operate, is equally essential. And it may be expedient to repeat here the fact that the Bible Christian Connexion, unlike some other of the minor Methodist bodies, is not a "split," a separated branch from the great Wesleyan body. As related to the Mother Church of Methodism, it is not a "schismatic" section of that communion, since, apart from one or two persons in the early part of its history, it had no vital association with Wesleyan Methodism. It is not, therefore, historically, a "separated branch," cut off by wilful persons because of disagreement on

doctrinal, ecclesiastical, or political questions. It is essentially a growth, an evolution of religious and spiritual life resident in the souls of a few men and women to whom had been given the blest vision of God, and who were bent on telling to others the glory of that which they saw.

To the growth of this small but vigorous communion the Rev. Frederick William Bourne, during a period extending over fifty years, rendered incomparable service. Born in the beautiful but isolated village of Woodchurch, Kent, on July 25th, 1830, early in life he was initiated into the "mysteries of the Kingdom of God." Inheriting strong religious instincts, and possessing native mental powers which few, if any, of his predecessors in the Bible Christian ministry surpassed, the deep spiritual impressions received when young culminated in his decision for Christ ere he had passed beyond the period which frequently proves so critical to young people. When only twenty years of age he was accepted as a probationer for the Bible Christian ministry,—a ministry which, at that period, received the scantiest remuneration for heroic services rendered, married preachers receiving as salary the sum of £40. and single men something like £10 per year. The inducements to enter the ministry at that period were frugal meals, poor dwellings, long journeys on country roads by day and by night, and the privilege of preaching several sermons a week to scattered populations in rural districts, returning home late in the week. Those were heroic days, fraught with wonderful benediction to preachers and people, the spiritual influences

then created being felt by the denomination to the present hour. "One soweth, and another reapeth."

When in reminiscent mood, Mr. Bourne indulged in the pleasant exercise of relating to his younger brethren in the ministry some amusing stories concerning himself and the first few circuits in which he laboured. Being in early life somewhat thin and pale, and practically destitute of personal adornment and attraction, when entering upon his work in one important circuit he met with a somewhat peculiar reception. Certain persons, gifted evidently with more than ordinary aesthetic perception, said when the young preacher appeared, "that if the Conference could not send them a man, they might have sent them something to look at." Strange and varied impressions were made upon the minds of some of the leaders in the denomination and in the circuits by the young preacher. Some were exceedingly dubious as to his loyalty to the Connexion, and were sufficiently sceptical as to his faithful adherence to the church of his choice, that they ventured upon the dangerous ground of prophecy, and predicted that after the young man had been a minister in the denomination a few years he would certainly leave it, and that he might as well take his departure at once. The groundlessness of such a prophecy is evident to all who had the slightest acquaintance with Mr. Bourne; and knowing, as some do, the powerful inducements held out to him in later years to forsake his high and noble calling, it seems somewhat strange that such impressions respecting his fidelity and loyalty should have

been possible. It is not too much to affirm that a more devoted, loyal, and faithful minister the denomination never produced, and again and again did he emphasize the necessity of devotion and loyalty on the part of his younger brethren, if the Connexion was to maintain its position and fulfil its function in the world. Himself gifted with those admirable qualities which combine to make up what is conveniently termed "individuality," he heeded not, however, the suspicions of his brethren, but marked out and proceeded on his own course, following those spiritual instincts and aptitudes which differentiated him from so many of his predecessors and contemporaries.

Mr. Bourne's first appointment was in the Chatham Circuit, which covered many miles of the hop county. Here he remained two years, proceeding thence to the Devonport Circuit, which at that period included Plymouth. After spending four successful years in this Metropolis of the West, he received an appointment to the Swansea and Aberavon Circuit, returning, after an interval of a few years' service at Newport (Mon.), to the Devonport Circuit for a second term. Here he remained seven years - at that time in Connexional history, when the itinerant system was more rigid than in later years - a rather prolonged pastorate. He enriched the spiritual life of his people by earnest and faithful preaching of the verities of the Gospel, and added to his own mental and religious life by prayerful reading and study. So effective at this period was his ministry, so rich was it in those intellectual and spiritual qualities which gave him such a commanding position in

the Connexion, that there remain at Devonport a few who remember his service with affection and gratitude.

His intellectual force, strength of personality, and power for service shown in the various circuits in which he laboured, soon brought him into prominence, so that comparatively early in his ministerial career he became an object of admiration and affection to his brethren. As far as the writer's knowledge goes, few ministers during the last forty or fifty years have been honoured with the Presidency of the Conference within a period of twenty years after entrance upon the active work of the ministry. This honour was conferred upon Mr. Bourne at St. Austell in 1867—seventeen years from the commencement of his ministry as a probationer. This was significant of much—a testimony to recognised worth, and a prophecy of greater things. To be made President after seventeen years' service, and when only thirty-seven years of age, is an honour which few men win, and is sufficient proof of Mr. Bourne's versatile gifts, and the strength and beneficence of his influence. At the Exeter Conference, in 1875, he was appointed to fill the chair a second time, whilst at the Plymouth Conference, in 1891, the esteem and reverence for him experienced by his brethren and the lay representatives prompted them to honour him with the Presidency for the third time. Other brethren since 1850 have twice filled the chair, but the experience of Mr. Bourne, in being President of Conference three times within a period of twenty-five years, is altogether unique. In the early history of the

Connexion, when its ramifications were not so wide, nor its financial and other responsibilities so weighty, the same person frequently presided over the deliberations of the Conference. This was the case with Mr. O'Bryan and others, but during the last half-century there have been but few who have been honoured with re-election to the Presidential chair.

The activities of Mr. Bourne were distributed over a wide area, and embraced many departments of ministerial service. He was elected assistant-editor of the *Connexional Magazine* in 1861, editor-in-chief in 1866, and editor and book steward combined in 1869. In this two-fold office he continued until 1888, when he resigned the post of book steward, but continued the work of editor. In this capacity he rendered fruitful service, both to the denomination and to the general public interested in its beneficent work. Numerous articles on manifold subjects were contributed to its pages by himself, and a high standard was ever maintained. If there has been a defect in the composition of the *Magazine*, its flavour has been a little too literary, and it has not provided those popular elements which seem so essential to win public favour and ensure financial success. As much as this was conceded by the late editor when this criticism was offered a few years prior to his retirement.

In 1866 he became the *Connexional Treasurer*, and continued to hold the position until failing health compelled him, in 1901, to surrender a portion of his task. An assistant was appointed,

who has now practically assumed the whole responsibility. In 1881 Mr. Bourne visited the churches in South Australia, Victoria, and Queensland, returning home via New Zealand, the United States, and Canada. During this tour he came into contact with many friends from the homeland, fellowship with whom was an inspiration, and a source of spiritual delight. He was a member of the three Methodist Ecumenical Conferences, held respectively in England in 1881, in America in 1891, and in City-road Chapel, London, in 1901. At each of these Conferences he entered into the proceedings with earnestness and zest, always sharing in the discussions.

The reasons to be assigned for his popularity are not far to seek. From the commencement of his ministry he lived the "strenuous life." Rising sometimes as early as four o'clock in the morning, and frequently at five, he invariably put in a hard day's work. On his removal to London he regularly occupied the pulpit on Sundays. He was pastor of Jubilee in 1878, and Jubilee and Clapham in 1879, and for several years he had in addition the pastoral oversight of Sevenoaks. The demands for his services as special preacher were constant. He was a member of nearly all Conference committees, and for a long period acted as an examiner of candidates for the ministry. During about one-half of his life he discharged the most important official duties of the Connexion, holding simultaneously the offices of Connexional Treasurer, Connexional Editor, and Book Steward, besides preaching twice on Sundays, and two or three times in the week. He was invariably present

at the Annual Conference, and was unexcelled in devotion to his work on committees. Astonishment at his capacity for work and power of endurance has been frequently expressed by ministers twenty years his junior. When over seventy years of age he was known to attend a Conference committee meeting at seven in the morning, superintend his work as Connexional Treasurer, take part in the discussions in the Conference during the day, and remain till the close of the final meeting at night. A tireless worker, to whom duty was sacred, his achievements on the purely business side of denominational service excelled those of any other Bible Christian minister, living or dead, and won for him the esteem and gratitude of every loyal, devoted member of the denomination. He lived a laborious life, and the price paid was known only to himself. He informed his younger brethren at a recent Conference that he had had "to learn to speak, and even to pray." Fifty years of faithful toil proved he had learnt the lessons well.

As a debater in Conference he had few equals, and none superior. Quick to detect the weakness of an argument, in a few sentences he showed the danger of following the policy suggested. His knowledge of the history of the Connexion, its constitution, laws, and usages, was unique. Facts, figures, and incidents came to him as readily as texts of Scripture. He knew not only *what* to say, but *when* to say it. Again and again has the writer observed this fact when any important question was being discussed in Conference—Mr. Bourne was invariably the last person to contribute to the debate. The advantage accruing

to the last speaker in a lengthy discussion is evident, especially when he is certain of the respectful hearing always meted out to Mr. Bourne. From this, however, it must not be inferred that Mr. Bourne was infallible in his judgments, or that he carried conviction in all his pronouncements. Were this a critical, rather than a brief biographical sketch, it would be necessary, in this connection, to point out that the limitations common to humanity were shared by Mr. Bourne. He was not destitute of irrational prejudices, nor exempt from the play of those subtle influences which give an unreasoning bias in critical judgments. Were it necessary, it would not be difficult to point to some of the natural infirmities in his character. The conviction is general that he loved position and power; but equally widespread is the conviction that these he used for the good of the denomination and the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom. But the weakness incident to this ambition was not always concealed, and now and again it would be disclosed in verbal expressions and critical judgments. Like all men conscious of their imperfections and limitations, he not only erred in judgment, but sometimes went far wide of the mark. But "to err is human," and error in conviction and judgment is inevitable wherever there is limitation of perception and knowledge. This venerable, heroic warrior, conscious of his own personal strength and influence, and determined to reach a definite goal, marched breast forward again and again, carrying nearly the whole of the Conference with him. If in some things subsequent events proved that he was mistaken, those

who followed him had the comforting reflection that the error was the result of lack of vision, and not of heart.

He was well known as an earnest and powerful advocate of Methodist Union, the constraining motives being the interests of the Kingdom of God, and the larger, wider influence of the churches uniting. The subject rested upon his heart—it was a part of his permanent thought, the dream of his life, for the realisation of which he prayed and wrote and laboured as few others have done. It was to him an ideal charged with inspiration and strength, and, amid the most unpromising signs, it never receded beyond his vision. His hope for years had been to see one Methodist Church in England, one Methodist Church in France, one Methodist Church in India, and one Methodist Church in China. Had the achievement of such a desirable union been possible within his lifetime, none would have been more grateful than he. When, however, it does come, and the full tide of blessing flows over the world as never before, no name will be more worthy of being associated with the history of the movement than that of Frederick William Bourne.

As a preacher he stood in the forefront for more than a third of a century. When in the zenith and glory of his power as a preacher, no one received more numerous invitations for special services. There are few chapels in the Connexion in which he did not preach or give an address, and there were few families of importance to him unknown. His name was a household word

throughout the Connexion—from Millom, in Cumberland, to Penzance, in Cornwall, and even in the distant colonies of Canada and Australia. His popularity was the result of his greatness, and is therefore of a permanent character. To his ministerial brethren, to the denomination as a whole, and to members of the religious public, he stood forth as a magnificent illustration of what is meant by a loyal, faithful minister of the Gospel of the Grace of God. From the first he was a preacher of ability and spiritual force, making his appeals both to the intellect and the conscience, the reason and the heart. The tones of his voice had a richness and sweetness which few preachers possess. They seemed to be the creation of well-controlled emotion and fine spiritual sympathy. Listening to his well-formed, mellifluous sentences was like listening to the tender passion of the human soul expressing itself in soft, sweet music, the pathos and power of which touched the delicate chords of the spirit, and made them vibrate with religious rapture. Rarely when preaching was he heard to shout, but frequently, when under deep emotion, and swayed by the vast issues determined by the acceptance or rejection of the message, the tones of his voice were heightened, the words came with unction from his lips, and his appeals were of the most searching character. His sermons were neither “brief, bright, nor breezy,” but solid, strong, and full of Gospel marrow. Flimsy rhetoric in the pulpit was a plaything in which he never indulged. It is not inconceivable that to some, who have but little taste for solid, strong meat, some of the sermons of Mr. Bourne would be regarded as dull

and heavy. Of manufactured anecdotes there was none, and if illustrations were used they were culled from religious biography, English literature, or from personal observation of life. Though not lacking the sense of humour, he rarely made use of this quality in the pulpit. Few ever witnessed a congregation "smile audibly" or laugh aloud at any statement made in preaching by Mr. Bourne. Possessed of a voice with great carrying power, rich and flexible, he proclaimed the fundamental truths of the Great Evangel, and drove them home to the heart and conscience and intellect of his congregation with the earnestness and passion of a soul that knew by experience the blessedness they bring when unreservedly received. His themes were almost exclusively Biblical—the grace of Christ, the love of God, the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. He was pre-eminently a *doctrinal* preacher, but the doctrine was always emphasized as bearing the closest relation to ethical conduct. His only published sermons are a volume entitled "Workers together with God," which won for its author the highest praise.

Mr. Bourne's manifold duties prevented him from contributing largely to literature. He is the author of a number of articles in the Connexional Magazine, a few of them having appeared under the title, "Fragments of my Autobiography." He wrote a "Life of James Thorne," "All for Christ, and Christ for all—a Memoir of William Bailey"; and "Ready in Life and Death—Brief Memorials of Mrs. Terrett." The book, however, by which he is universally known, and by which possibly he will be remembered by the general public, is "The

King's Son: or, Memorials of Billy Bray." It has had, and still has, a remarkable sale, and the beneficent influence exerted by it has been of the most encouraging character.

The chief literary production of the author, however, is the recently-published volume entitled "The Bible Christians—their Origin and History." Commenced in 1901, and published in monthly parts, owing to failing health and strength the venerable author was unable to complete it as soon as desired. Suffering when half-way through his work from a nervous break-down, and his memory, on which he had been accustomed to rely, failing him for the time, he was unable to continue, and for awhile he was wholly incapacitated; and even when he was able to resume the task, which, he says, he had got to love as if it had been wholly self-imposed, he could not proceed, except at brief intervals, even with the assistance of friends. The book was the most ambitious literary effort of his life, and being anxious to complete it ere he passed to his everlasting rest, all his powers of mind and soul were summoned to the accomplishment of the work upon which he had set his heart. Heroically he struggled on, fighting against tremendous odds; but the victory was his, for ere he closed his eyes in the sleep that knows no waking this side of the stars, the volume was printed and bound, and he had the great delight which all writers experience when their much-loved tasks have been successfully achieved.

"The days of our years are three-score years and ten." At the Conference of 1904, at St. Austell, it

was observed that the pulse of life was diminishing in vigour and strength, the once active intellect was gradually losing its agility and fire, and the memory, which for fifty years had been the repository of the best and holiest traditions of the Bible Christian Connexion, showed signs of losing its hold on the past. Life's shadows were gradually gathering round this "warrior of the Lord," the light which once shone in those lustrous eyes was slowly waning—the rich, full music of his voice was passing into soft and measured cadence, and the combined pathos and tragedy of existence were beginning to reveal themselves. It was evident to all that his days were drawing to a close, and that his remarkable presence would never again be seen at an Annual Conference. Notwithstanding, however, the signs of feebleness and diminishing powers, life was prolonged for nearly twelve months, during which period he exhibited the same spirit of heroism and perseverance in seeking to accomplish his favourite tasks as had characterised him in the strength and vigour of his early manhood. But these were months, too, of weariness, exhaustion, and suffering, which only ceased when the end came on Wednesday morning, July 26th—the day after he had reached his seventy-fifth year, and the fifty-fifth year of his ministry in the Bible Christian Connexion. As was fitting, his remains were interred in the Burying Ground of the Chapel, Shebbear, where so many of the sainted and honoured dead are laid to rest.

This sketch, brief as it necessarily is, would be incomplete were nothing said of Mr. Bourne's in-

fluence outside the limits of his own Church. Beloved by his own people, he was esteemed and revered by multitudes in other denominations. A representative of "one of the smallest of the tribes of Israel," he was a familiar figure in all Nonconformist circles. Known to his Nonconformist brethren as the Venerable "Father" Bourne, his name to them was symbolic of piety, loyalty, love, devotion, and self-denying service. It is no secret that, if health and strength had permitted, he would have received, early in its history, the honour of being President of the National Free Church Council. Its love and admiration for this Grand Old Man of Bible Christian Methodism were distinctly manifest at the Brighton Conference, when, on his ascending the platform to speak, the audience rose *en masse* to greet him—a spontaneous recognition of intellectual and spiritual worth.

The denomination has been productive of men of the noblest type of character—men with strong convictions, restless zeal, and a passion for souls apostolic and unquenchable. The names of William O'Bryan, James Thorne, William Reed, Cephas Barker, Samuel Pollard, and others, rise immediately before one's vision. These are the names of saintly and sainted men, revered by all Bible Christians; but, great as they were, revered as they are to-day by thousands of their spiritual descendants throughout the world—for depth and strength of character, spiritual vision and business capacity, power to organise and guide, to perceive the spiritual beauty of Christian truth and to proclaim it to the world—in a word, to be a

preacher, ecclesiastic, statesman, financier, and administrator—few, if any, are more worthy of esteem, admiration, reverence, and love than the name of Frederick William Bourne.

Mr. DAVID MARTIN (Hicks Mill).

TO venture to describe the character and spirit and service of the late David Martin in the space at my disposal is to attempt the impossible ; and even were it multiplied ten-fold, much would remain unsaid, not merely because of the limits of space, but because there were so many elements in his life and character which language is inadequate to describe. The fervency of his spirit when wrestling in prayer for Heaven's benediction upon himself, or upon those with whom he was closely identified in the church—the light that shone in his eyes as he sat in his pew in the gallery, listening with concentrated attention to the music of the evangel of the grace of God as revealed in Christ—the glow upon his face, reflecting the glory of the transfigured life within—the movements of his body when he felt deeply stirred by the passionate appeals of earnest preachers beseeching the people to be reconciled to God—these, and many other features intimately associated with his life and character, transcend the vehicle of written speech.

David Martin was a saint, and a saint cannot be photographed with the crude materials of pen,

ink, and paper. The very elements that make a saint are exactly the elements that elude description. They are mystical, unearthly, transcending all the systems of ethics known to philosophers, having their source in Him, between Whom and the saintly spirit there is a fellowship and a oneness to which



those who live on the lower planes of life are strangers. To understand a saint, in any large degree, he must be seen, and communed with, and the potent influence of his sanctified personality must touch the sensitive chords of one's own spirit.

There are two kinds of saints—those who cut themselves adrift from the great stream of human activities, and immure themselves within the haven of a secluded monastery, thus depriving the struggling world of the benefit of their moral worth and spiritual impulse—and those who, following the method of their Master, associate with publicans and sinners, and seek to purify society with the breath of their obedient lives. David Martin was found in the second category. Born in August, 1805, he was born again from above in 1823, during the ministry of the sainted William Reed. He was the descendant of pious and devout ancestors, and he attributed to them some of the dispositions he cherished in early life. He was pre-eminently a man of prayer, with the result that the weekly prayer-meeting to him was as cogent in its attractiveness as the usual preaching service. In the atmosphere of prayer and devotion he breathed and lived continually, and it was as easy and natural for him, after returning from the day's toil, to spend half-an-hour in his bedroom communing with the Highest as to sit down to partake of the evening meal. A Methodist of the old school, full of fiery energy, and strong in the conviction that the ramparts of the enemy could only be destroyed by prayer and faith, hundreds of times he wrestled with "strong crying and tears" on the floor of Hicks Mill Chapel, until one might have thought he must succumb through sheer physical exhaustion. When the heavens seemed as brass, and there was no sign that the attentive ear of the Lord of Hosts was open unto the cries of His people, and they were

becoming despondent at the non-realisation of "power," he would fervently ejaculate—"Hold on, my dears, the power is coming—'round the walls again." Heartened by his intercession and faith, the prayer meeting would be continued until the heavens of brass yielded, and showers of blessing descended upon the waiting people. The first signs of the approaching shower would evoke from him expressions of praise. "Glory, glory be to God" would come as fluently from his lips as did previous petitions for a revival of the work of God. He asked from God liberal supplies of blessing, and when he received them, others were made acquainted with it. His emotional nature was strong, and as deep as it was strong, revealing itself in manifold ways. His spiritual instincts seemed the dominant elements in an intensely devout and religious nature, cultivated and developed by frequent communion with God and reading of the Scriptures, and by practical service in seeking to enrich the lives of others, by leading them into the same great spiritual inheritance.

For more than half-a-century he was a pillar of strength to the denomination in the Hicks Mill Circuit, and a fountain whence flowed perpetually the pellucid and refreshing streams of a Divinely-created life. Both beyond and near there are scores who owe to him some of the best wealth of their Christian experience, and not a few owe to him their very souls. Though never elevated to the pulpit as an accredited local preacher, he was ever a missionary, accomplishing silently by personal contact, and by "sowing beside all waters," spiritual results rarely produced by ordinary ser-

mons. By direct appeal to the conscience and heart of the individual he produced impressions which deepened and strengthened, until they culminated in consecration to Christ and His service. Not a few local preachers and class leaders, and more than one minister, could bear testimony to this fact.

It is easy, and not uncommon, to speak of the "atmosphere of heaven" existing in rooms where loved ones are quietly passing into the fuller light of the regions beyond. David Martin lived in this atmosphere daily, and conversation with him, to say nothing whatever of prayer at the family altar, was always a means of spiritual enrichment and strength. For months he was an invalid, being nearly blind to the objects in his room, but he possessed the spiritual vision of an ancient prophet, and frequently saw things which it were not possible to reveal to men who live upon the ordinary planes of life. He knew by experience the blessedness of sitting in the heavenly places with Christ Jesus his Lord, and to those who visited him during his prolonged confinement to his room it was evident that he had listened to, and heard voices, which came from other worlds than this. The writer, with many others, visited him during his later months on earth, and the testimony from all is that to have been in his presence was a means of grace and a source of pure spiritual delight. He died as he lived, joyful in the Christ who redeemed and saved him. He was unapostolic in his feelings respecting death. He so longed to be with his Master, that he wanted death to hasten her footsteps, and release

him from the bondage of the flesh. For him death had no terror. He had fought and conquered the fear of death many years ago, and when the end came, on March 13th, 1902, he welcomed it as joyously as he welcomed the dawn of Christian light upon his soul seventy-nine years before.

The tendency to colour unduly the life and character of one's departed friends is checked in this instance by the consciousness that it is utterly impossible to describe in a few pages the spirit, work, worth, life, and character of such a man as the late David Martin. Often as the words are quoted, it is no exaggeration to say that his departure from Hicks Mill to fairer climes was an irreparable loss, and it requires no ordinary faith to predict that this place, sanctified and made historic by so many triumphs of redeeming grace, will easily and readily produce such an one as he. By his departure Hicks Mill lost a saint, and the district a light that never failed.

Rev. WILLIAM JAMES HOCKING.

(President of Conference, 1871).

JUDGED by the standard of attendance at the Annual Conference, the subject of this sketch must be regarded as one of the most loyal and devoted members of the denomination. Few men in this respect have a better record, Mr. Hocking having for many years looked upon a visit to the summer gathering as his annual

outing. Sitting near the front—an indication of his many years of service—and bowed with age and natural infirmity, the vision of his presence would not kindle the imagination, nor suggest thoughts of striking ability or great force of character. Below the average height, with snow-



white hair adorning his head, a stranger might conclude that he lacked those qualities which make up what is termed personality; but closer contact would dispel the illusion, and should the conversation turn upon some of the problems of theology, the discovery would be made that here

was a man whose spirit was almost absorbed in those theological questions which for eighteen centuries have taxed the minds of the greatest. Neither men nor things are what they *appear* to be, and illusions are the common experiences of all men, of whatever range of intellect or heart.

In Mr. Hocking's life there are no great crises, or notably sudden changes. Each experience has naturally grown from its predecessor, and as naturally led on to the next. He was born at Redruth on March 2nd, 1830, but his spiritual birth may not be so precisely denoted. His entrance into the kingdom was gradual, but pronounced enough for him to become a church member when fifteen years of age. Meeting in class, his reserve kept him a silent member for three or four years, until a new class leader was appointed, who brought extra pressure to bear, not only for class meeting testimony, but for work in the circuit as a local preacher. At Lady-day his initials appeared on the plan, and at the Midsummer Quarterly Meeting, 1849, he was examined in the morning as a candidate for the local plan, and in the afternoon as a candidate for the itinerant ministry. Not only was a hearty recommendation sent to the District Meeting and Conference, but it was accompanied with a request that Mr. Hocking be appointed to that circuit the following year. The request was acceded to, but owing to youthfulness and inexperience the name was not recorded in the Minutes of Conference the first year. The circuits which have received the benefit of his ministry are Gwennap, Shebbear, Barnstaple, London (Jubilee), Kingsbrompton, Bodmin, Truro,

Sandown (I. of W.), Aberavon, Jubilee, London (second time), Bodmin (second time), Redruth (late Gwennap, second time), and Newton Abbot. When in this last-mentioned sphere, and whilst visiting another circuit on missionary work, he contracted a chill, which necessitated a year's rest, during which time Mrs. Hocking's illness and death led to his seeking superannuation.

It is well to observe that Mr. Hocking's intellectual position is not the result of special advantages, but is entirely due to his habit of close application and persistent plodding. He attacked his probationary studies with such ardour as to produce hemorrhage, which led to his tendering his resignation; but, happily, it was not accepted. Received into full connexion at Exeter in 1853, he has never been grudging in his labours for the denomination. With Mr. Bourne he journeyed in the Falmouth District, advocating the claims of the Jubilee Fund. For ten years, with credit to himself and to the advantage of the Missionary Society, he was its Home Secretary. Frequently the confidence of his brethren was shewn by his superintendency of the district in which he travelled, whilst in 1871 he was at Hicks Mill elected President of the Conference. At the St. Austell Conference, in 1876, his intellectual powers were recognised by his preaching the official sermon. Of the Examining Committee he has been a member from its formation, and for a considerable time acted as its secretary. For two years after his superannuation he was theological tutor at Shebbear, and now any probationer within reasonable distance may find it worth while to visit

Mr. Hocking, his interest in young men being so intense that too much cannot be asked of him. His theological position may be inferred from the following quotation from his "charge" delivered to the young men, and referred to in page 437 of "The Bible Christians—their Origin and History." "I most conscientiously and deliberately affirm, without wishing to attack any system, only to convey to you the intensity of my feeling, that I would much rather be a Roman Catholic priest than a Unitarian minister. The one, notwithstanding the erroneous views we think he holds, does believe and preach the divinity of Christ. The other, though accustomed to present his utterances in the clearest and most attractive manner, provokes the exclamation, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.'"

His daily studies are still mapped out as methodically as though he were reading for an examination, the love of language being still a ruling passion. His mind is still vigorous, and his favourite saying, "Although one of the oldest, I wish I were one of the youngest," correctly denotes the buoyancy of his spirit, and the realm in which he lives. He still serves the churches. His placid temperament would at first suggest that his life has been ever smooth, but forty years of ministerial service have not been without their disturbing elements. Twice in his home life the clouds have hung low and dark. His only son, full of promise, and having achieved notable scholastic distinction, passed away with tragic suddenness; and, later, the death of Mrs. Hocking

meant the loss of one of the sweetest of souls. With two daughters he now enjoys the evening of his days, having many happy and some quaint memories of the past, and for the future, a hope blooming with immortality.—(W. R. A. B.)

Rev. JOHN TREMELLING.

(President of Conference, 1874).

ON the eleventh day of July, 1828, in an isolated spot on the south-west coast of the Delectable Duchy, ten miles distant from the nearest railway station, and cut adrift from the main current of civilisation, was born a child who eventually, by the grace of Christ and the right use of time and talent, became one of the ablest preachers in the Bible Christian Connexion. Born at Coverack, amid conditions of the most unpromising character, and with an inheritance which contained no prophecy of the great future that was his, John Tremelling will always be regarded by the thoughtful as one of the greatest pulpit forces the denomination has produced. Cornwall has sent forth many men of repute, some of whom are immortal. Of Cornishmen who have entered the Bible Christian ministry, —and they are many—second to none stands the name of John Tremelling as preacher and platform speaker.

Prior to his conversion, and when he was a ringleader in sports, thoughtful people saw that

he was "a lad o' pairts." At an early age, during a revival at Ponsangath, Helston Circuit, he gave his heart to God. His conversion was real, his consecration was complete, and he endured to the end. His Christian life was characterized by intellectual rather than by emotional habit. He never made a loud profession of godliness, but he possessed power. Inspired by love for Christ, and



a desire to save souls, he commenced Christian work early. His new birth-cry was, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" When only seventeen, he was called by his church to preach "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God." He was known for some time as "the boy preacher," and his services were sought after, not only by his own church, but by others. His fame spread throughout the

entire district, and people thronged to hear him, wondering at his power. His delight was to "preach Christ and Him crucified," and he had not only a Gospel to preach, but he took care so to preach it as to make people hear it. He always felt it his duty to offer his best to both his Master and the congregation. Through close study of good books, and especially the Bible, earnest prayer, and the blessing of God, he became "a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

In 1851 he was called to the full work of the ministry, and sent to the Isle of Wight (West). At the very outset he made his mark—a mark that deepened with succeeding years. Though young, his sermons were characterized by such depth of thought and power that on one occasion a dear old lady became alarmed, and requested his superintendent to advise him not to preach such sermons on week nights, as he would certainly run himself out; but, disregarding this well-meant advice, on he went for two whole years, increasing in power, and in the esteem and attachment of the people.

Few men ever prepared more carefully than he for the pulpit; and his sermons were like well-wrought metal from the anvil—the forging of his own hand and heart, produced by the sweat of his own brain, and were so well thought out that for many years he delivered them without manuscript or notes. He was pre-eminently a preacher, and, with an eye of fire fixed on his congregation, he sent his burning thoughts like arrows into their

hearts and consciences, and sometimes great results followed. In his ordinary week-night services he often preached sermons worthy of being delivered on any occasion; but on all special occasions he appeared at his best, doing himself and his denomination great credit. The sermon he preached at the Exeter Conference in 1865 will not soon be forgotten. He was generally good on the platform, often rising to great heights of power. Sometimes his addresses were masterpieces of eloquence. The charge he delivered at Exeter to the young ministers received in 1875 was equal to anything of the kind ever delivered before a Bible Christian audience. His Sunday morning missionary sermon at the Forest Hill Conference, in 1888, was equally powerful. Dr. Stewart, of Mount Alison University, Sackville, a delegate from Canada, said it was the ablest discourse he had heard in England. He was always perfectly at home in the pulpit there he made his power felt, and there he did his greatest work. He was a true servant of the denomination, and loved greatly his own people. It was Christ first, then the Connexion. He received inducements to leave it, but on one occasion only did they weigh with him, and then only sufficiently to test the strength of his love for the church of his adoption. While always delighted to serve other churches, his own pulpit was never neglected for even the most popular services elsewhere. On one occasion, on a Sunday morning, a carriage was sent from another church, a distance of three miles, in order that he might fill a disappointment. "But," he asked, "who is to take my place?" he being

appointed at his own church in the same town. "O! we will send your people a good local preacher," was the reply. He did not despise a local preacher, but he said, "If a local preacher is good enough for my people, he is good enough for yours"; and so the carriage was sent empty away, while he attended to his own work.

He was a great reader, a devourer of the best books. Intellectually, he fed upon that which expanded his mind, gave him energy and inspiration for service, and light on things pertaining to God, His character, truth, purposes, kingdom, and glory. He possessed stores of general knowledge, but his strength lay in his knowledge of the Word of God. He was a theologian of the old Methodist type; and while his mind was always open to the reception of truth, new theories and advanced criticism possessed no charm unless he found they would square with the test of Revelation and experience. He was a true friend to young men, and a helper of them all, particularly his colleagues, who were not "too old to learn or too proud to be taught"; and some of his most capable colleagues will always bless the day when they were sent to travel with him. His great strength lay in the pulpit. True, he never neglected the suffering, the sorrowful, and the bereaved, but pastoral gossip he could never endure. He possessed the secret of winning the sincere respect of all thoughtful people, and in every circuit in which he travelled he formed friendships that continued to the end of life. His gifts as a speaker were so much appreciated that he was called to do a great deal of public work. For years he regularly

received one, and sometimes two appointments by Conference to missionary deputation work. At anniversaries, chapel openings, and re-openings, his services were in constant request.

As a friend, he was kind and courteous to all, but to those who possessed a kindred spirit with his own he was a true and tender brother. He enjoyed the confidence of his brethren, as is seen from the fact that for many years he sustained the office of District Superintendent, and for some time the office of Home Secretary of the Missionary Society. And never were its duties more efficiently and conscientiously discharged. Upon him, in 1874, was conferred the highest honour the Connexion has to bestow. In 1896 he retired from circuit work, yet by no means from the Master's service. In his own and other circuits, and in other churches, he was constantly engaged, and to the end his services were highly appreciated. His early enthusiasm burned within him to the end.

He travelled in the following Circuits—Isle of Wight (West), Gwennap, Chatham, Farnham, Guernsey, Newport (Mon.), Devonport, London, Newport (I. of W.), Southampton, Truro, Torquay, Aberavon, and Redruth. On retiring in 1896 he took up his residence at Falmouth, where for nearly four years he enjoyed the respect of a large circle of friends. He still made himself useful, taking his full share of deputation and other work, and was District Secretary of the committee for the examination of young local preachers, a work in which he took great interest. Some time before his end he had severe attacks of the heart then

came the final one—in which “he departed to be with Christ, which is far better.” He made nothing of dying, and he died as he lived, firmly resting upon “The Rock of Ages.”—(T. E. M.)

Mr. JOHN CORY (Jersey).

AT Tresparrett, in the parish of St. Juliott, on August 2nd, 1822, a child was born who was destined to play no insignificant part in the development of what may legitimately be denominated the famous Jersey Circuit. Left fatherless when only eight years of age, having five brothers and two sisters, the lad was compelled, through family exigencies, to start work when twelve years of age. For a few months he played the part of a shepherd-boy on an adjoining farm, but at twelve years of age he was apprenticed to the tailoring and drapery business at St. Gennys for a period of six years. His apprenticeship completed, he continued to serve the same master for three years. His wage was small, and there arose in him that element of Divine discontent which inspired him to venture forth in quest of a more lucrative sphere. Influenced by a sister who was residing in Jersey, he decided to try his fortune in the Sunny Island, and at twenty-two years of age he crossed the Channel for the first time. Many times since has he crossed and re-crossed this narrow strip which separates the home of his childhood from the land of his adoption, yet never has he had occasion to regret



MR. JOHN CORY.

the hour when he first stepped on board the boat at Plymouth to convey him to Jersey.

A Bible Christian when living in Cornwall, John Cory continued a Bible Christian when he crossed the sea, and joined the church at Great Union Road. For some reason or another, instead of developing his gifts along the lines adopted at St. Gennys, he cut out for himself a new path, and became associated with the business of a butcher. After four years' service under another, he again ventured forth, and this time to create a business for himself. Gifted with insight, shrewdness, and the capacity for hard work, coupled with the laudable ambition to realise his own endowments in a sphere fitting as well as profitable, it was natural to him to mark out an original course for himself, and to pursue that course heedless of the consequences that might follow. How far he was justified in fleeing from the needle and thread of the tailor and grasping the knife of the butcher, may be gathered from the fact that, from the commencement, the sun of prosperity shone upon him, and has continued to shine to the present day. Beginning in comparatively a small way, the business developed as the years passed on, until the name of John Cory became one of the best known names in the Island of Jersey. A man of integrity and honour, and regulating his business life according to sound ethical principles, he has won the confidence of his customers and those having business relations with him, with the result that he has not only prospered in the world, but has gained for himself a reputation more precious than rubies, and compared with which gold is as dust.

“ Neighbour John ” Cory’s interest, however, has not been limited to his own business, neither has he been a slave to the mechanism that converts energy and industry into gold. From the commencement he has allowed the other and higher portions of his nature to express themselves, and for more than half-a-century he has exhibited the greatest possible interest in the work of the denomination, both in Jersey and beyond it. When he came to the Island the chapel at Great Union Road was small, having accommodation for about 200 persons. Since then the chapel has been enlarged, and a commodious schoolroom added. For twenty-two years “ Neighbour John ” acted as steward, and also filled the offices of librarian and treasurer of the school. But for the last thirty-five years his chief religious interest has been centred in the Royal Crescent, the largest and most commodious building in the denomination. As the story of the purchase of the site and the building of the church has been already told, it is unnecessary to repeat it here. Suffice it that the inspiring genius in the initiation and development of the scheme by which such a magnificent property was secured was “ Neighbour John ” Cory. From the opening service to the present day he has loved the Royal Crescent with a love that has triumphed over manifold difficulties, and with a zeal which many waters could not quench. Metaphorically, the church of the Royal Crescent has been, and is, his only child, and from its infancy he has been its nurse, its guardian, and its protector. He has seen it in various moods, and amid struggling as well as prosperous conditions. He

has been an eye-witness when more than a thousand persons have been seated in its pews Sabbath after Sabbath, and he has seen it, alas! when its numbers have not exceeded three hundred. But amid its fluctuations he has ever been faithful and true the love that inspired him at the first has continued unabated, and now, after a period of more than thirty-five years, he may be seen regularly at his post as steward, notwithstanding that on August 2nd, 1906, he will have reached his eighty-fourth year. From the commencement he accepted the responsibility of treasurer of the trust estate, and sustained this relation until within recent months, when he was succeeded by his great-nephew, Mr. John Cory, jun. Thus for more than a third of a century "Neighbour John" shared in the financial responsibility relating to this valuable estate. Surely, he has the right to appropriate the words of the Psalmist, "I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth."

As regards "Neighbour John's" life and work and character, it is not easy to describe them in the space at one's command. He has been a practical dreamer,—a man who saw visions, and converted them into living realities. Uneducated in the technical meaning of the term, contact with life in its varied phases has developed his native gifts, and given him a power of perception and understanding denied to the majority of men. Common sense is one of his distinguishing characteristics, and it is this quality he admires in preachers and men generally. More ethically than

sentimentally religious, he is a man of sterling honour, and seeks to base his conduct on the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. He lays greater emphasis on the ethics of the New Testament than on its metaphysical doctrines, and has greater sympathy with him who is kind, merciful, and generous than with him who is rigidly orthodox, but lacks these qualities. To one injunction of Christ he gives a literal interpretation. His gifts to the needy are manifold and continuous, and he is a comforter and succourer of many, but his left hand is not permitted to know all that his right hand doeth. Such is the kindly interest he manifests in the welfare of others, that many a person will be bereft of material blessing when the time comes for him to depart. To many, and especially to the Bible Christian Denomination in Jersey, he has been a benefactor for more than half-a-century, and whoever may arise to fill the gap which he must soon create, it is scarcely possible for any man to possess a greater love, to exhibit a more intelligent interest, or to contribute with a more liberal hand towards the funds of the Royal Crescent Church, than "Neighbour John" Cory. Associated with him in his beneficent ministry is his wife, who shares his sympathies and purposes, and is ever willing to minister to the needs of the sorrowful and the distressed. Their sun is setting, and in the hearts of those who know them best will arise the prayer that it may descend beneath the horizon with the same brightness and glory as have accompanied it during its circuitous course in the heavens of life.

Rev. SAMUEL POLLARD.

M. R. Pollard was born at Padstow, Cornwall, on March 1st, 1826. When about seven years of age his father died, and he was left to the care of his mother, a godly Methodist, in whose house prayer meetings were usually held prior to the public service on Sabbath evenings. Thus was he early brought into contact with religion of a pronounced and practical kind. He was converted when about fifteen years of age, during a gracious revival which took place in his native town, and in which Thomas Tregaskis appears to have been the chief human agent. One of the earliest proofs that he had experienced the great change was an insatiable desire for knowledge, especially for such knowledge as would help him to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The call of the Church soon followed the call of God. Three young men, of whom Mr. Pollard was one, were made jointly responsible for some appointments on the local plan, but when the time arrived the others failed to appear, and he was left to do the best he could. He distinguished himself, however, on this first occasion, by preaching with closed eyes for an hour and a quarter.

He entered the regular ministry in 1852, and thenceforth gave himself without stint to what he loved to describe as "the great employ." He was first sent as a supply to the Tenterden Mission, and subsequently laboured in the Liskeard (twice),

Newport, I. of W. (twice), London, Kilkhampton, Camelford, Bodmin, Hicks Mill, Sevenoaks, Redruth, Megavissey, St. Just, St. Columb, and Shebbear Circuits. To him the ministry was a



sacred and solemn responsibility. His conception of it may be judged from words which were often upon his lips, such as "Whatsoever Thy hand findeth to do, do it with Thy might." "Whether

therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Perhaps the chief characteristic of his ministry was its whole-heartedness. His all was on the altar—his torch burned with a steady flame. With him nothing was trivial; everything bore the inscription "Holiness unto the Lord." How deeply he loved his work may be gathered from a passage in one of his letters just after his breakdown. He wrote, "I feel wonderfully thankful that I have been able, for nearly forty years, to fling my whole being into the greatest work under the heavens. They have been years of rare delight." He often expressed the wish that if it were the will of God he might have another forty years of such service. The excessive labours and privations of the past would have been gladly endured for the privilege of again preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

As a preacher, he was original, intensely earnest, and above all Biblical. To a habit of careful preparation he added a lively imagination, and his sermons were pointed and powerful. He believed in the Gospel he preached, in its completeness and its efficacy. He had a firm grasp of the great doctrines of Scripture, and he preached them with no uncertain sound, especially atonement by Christ, and pardon and purity through the blood of Jesus. He never wearied of preaching Jesus, "His adorable doing and dying." His last sermon, in which he seemed to excel himself, was based on a portion of Isa. liii.

It pleased God to make him a great soul-winner. This he ever considered his chief business.

"He watched for souls for whom the Lord
Did heavenly bliss forego."

With him to do this was a passion. If souls were not being saved and edified in the faith, it mattered little what else was done. In season and out of season, in the streets and highways, and by the fireside as well as in the sanctuary, he ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. He never forgot that he was a minister, was never ashamed of his vocation. It was complained of him on one occasion that "he pushed his religion so." The last day but one before his departure he contrived by means of a flower which he had plucked from the hedgerow to introduce to a group of young men the glories of the Name which is above every name.

To those most intimately associated with him he will ever be remembered for his diligent study of the Sacred Scriptures, the prevalency of his prayers, and the saintliness of his life. How he loved the Word of God his Bibles with their annotations plainly reveal. No duty, however important, was allowed to keep him long from his daily practice of reading the Word, which he usually did upon his knees. He might have said with perfect truth, "O, how love I Thy law; it is my meditation all the day."

And how he prayed! With what fervour and with what confidence, both at home and abroad, for all sorts and conditions of people, and for every worthy cause. Not only as the "remembrancer" of the family did he pray and cry aloud three times a day, but everywhere and always he lived in an atmosphere of communion with God, often wrestling with God for hours together; and into

whatsoever house he entered he invariably sought opportunity to pray with the inhabitants. As a prince, therefore, he prevailed with God and man. As might be expected, the firstfruits of his rare devotion were witnessed in his own life. He preached the doctrine of entire sanctification, and lived it. Patient, gentle, kind, and perfectly unselfish, his chief anxiety was to save others from anxiety; he seemed never to think of himself. The slave of all, his chief pleasure was in "ministering." It is not remembered that he spoke an unkind word of anyone.

And what a charm Nature had for him! How conversant he seemed with her in all her moods and operations. All things above, below, in ocean, earth, and sky, were charged with some message to him of the majesty, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Great Father. It was just God's other book, which he also patiently and carefully read, for confirmation and illustration of the truth of Revelation.

The last ten years of his life were years of great suffering—how great at times would never have been known but for his piteous cries to heaven, which were overheard. He suffered in silence rather than be the occasion of alarm to his dear ones, and no word of complaint escaped his lips during those years. Instead, he wrote, "The presence of the dear Lord Jesus with me in this little sickness is a wonderful comfort. I know from experience that He treats His prisoners well."

The heavenly world was very near to him, and very real. For some months "ere he sank into

Nature's last repose, he spoke freely of heaven and its occupations, expressing his conviction that he had yet a great work to do. "To the last," as was said of Wesley, "there was no diminishing, but increasing, the old zeal, the old wistfulness, the calm but fiery and revealing eloquence. He was one of those who attained the inward stillness, who had entered the second rest before they go home."

The end came suddenly and unexpectedly. Apparent improvement in health proved delusive, and on the morning of June 20th, 1902, without any warning, and with but the faintest sigh, his happy spirit took its flight. "He walked with God, and was not, for God took him."—(A. K.)

Rev. CHARLES BRIDGMAN.

EARLY in life Mr. Bridgman experienced the need of entering into spiritual communion with Christ. Trained in a Church Sunday School, with a pious and devout lady as teacher, he became conscious, under her influence, of the need of a change of heart, and when only about eleven years of age he was drawn in love towards the Saviour. The Vicar of the Church (the late Charles Henry Lethbridge) was evangelical in his teaching, and a devout Christian. Seeing in young Bridgman possibilities, he expressed a desire to send him to college. Both father and son were delighted with the suggestion, and arrangements were made to carry the proposal into effect. Before

the time arrived, however, for him to enter, the good clergyman was struck down with illness, and within a few days he had passed into the unseen, and all hopes of a college course for young Bridgman were dashed to the ground.



From this time until he was twenty-one he became careless and wayward concerning spiritual things, but never forgot the advice of his Sunday school teacher. One Sunday evening he attended a mission service in Bridgetown Old Chapel, and

here he became deeply impressed. After much wrestling the victory was won, and the peace of God, for which he longed, was his. He speedily entered into Christian service, and after rendering a good account of himself for four years as local preacher, he was requested by the late Mr. Matthew Robins to enter the ministry. Responding to this call in 1853, he was sent to Barnstaple as a "supply" for a brother who had left the Connexion. At the following Conference he was re-appointed to Barnstaple, with the late Mr. William Reed as his superintendent. The memory of this saintly man Mr. Bridgman still reveres. During his first year's probation Mr. Reed was much more than a superintendent; he was "more like a father" to the young probationer.

Since his days of probation Mr. Bridgman has travelled over many a wide field of service, having laboured in circuits in the North, South, East, and West. Being at the time of writing one of the oldest ministers in the Minutes, having been called into the ministry in 1853, he has experienced some of the discouragements so intimately associated with religious work, but he has ever had the consolation, more precious than material wealth, of knowing that in almost every circuit souls have been won to Christ. At the beginning of the second half of the last century denominational ways were not invariably "ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace"; but, nevertheless, they were heroically trodden, much to the comfort of those now privileged to use them. Mr. Bridgman in those days had a fair share of hard work, and, with many of his early contemporaries, was not

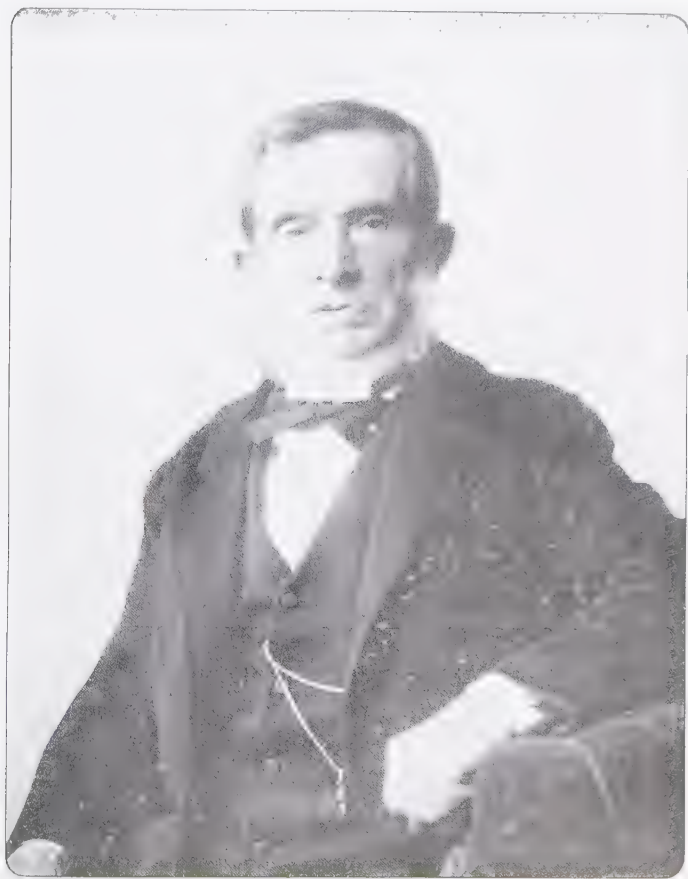
made rich with the greatness of the salary. During his stay in the Liphook Circuit he published a little volume entitled "Scripture Catechism," and this was followed by another little book on "Gospel History," which soon passed into the third edition, and is still on sale at the Bible Christian Bookroom.

In consequence of declining health, Mr. Bridgman several years since was placed on the superannuated list. This, however, to him has not meant complete separation from active service. He still renders assistance in the pulpit in the Redruth and Camborne Circuit, and has regular appointments on the plan. Between two and three years ago he underwent an operation, and it seems to have given him a new lease of life. His devoted wife—a daughter of the late Mr. William Oates, of Hicks Mill—has proved a help-meet indeed. Her gracious spirit and sound judgment have been of great service, both in family and circuit life. With both the evening of life has come, and the sun is descending in the West. When the hour comes for it to pass below the horizon, may it go down without a cloud, to rise again in beauty and strength "on the other side."

Mr. JOHN TUCKER (Looe).

BORN in May, 1823, in the parish of Lansallos, John Tucker from his earliest years manifested an intelligent interest in the Bible Christian Denomination. At his birth there was no Bible Christian Chapel at Crumple-

horn, but meetings were held in the kitchen of a house belonging to a Mr. Pearce. After a time a chapel was built—at present in use as a barn, a more commodious building having been found necessary—and the services held here young Tucker



attended regularly. He was very fond of accompanying local preachers to their appointments, and on one occasion he was taken by a local preacher named George Hicks to Lanreath Chapel. At this service the quickening influence of the Spirit was

experienced, and ere the meeting was over the lad was rejoicing in the possession of that blessing for which his soul had longed for many days. A field near by was the scene where he wept out his new-found joy, and where also he literally danced, because words were altogether inadequate to express his emotion.

In 1842 he became a local preacher, and continued to preach within a few months of his death. He came to Looe to reside in 1844. At that time religious services were held in a room. In 1846 a chapel was built, and a school having been formed, Mr. Tucker was appointed superintendent, a post which, in conjunction with his son, he held to the time of his decease.

There were two traits in his religious character which always impressed the writer of this sketch. His affection for the Bible Christian Denomination was intense and strong, and not infrequently would his remarks in conversation convey the idea that of all the preachers and churches in the country none were superior to those with which he was so closely identified. He knew several of the early preachers of the denomination. As preachers, well, other denominations might equal them, but could not possibly excel them. "Where," he would exclaim, when waxing warm on this subject, "where will you find abler preachers than ——?" Here would follow a list of a dozen or twenty names of men who have stood in the front rank of the denomination as eloquent preachers. He did not shrink from criticizing and complaining if preachers did not reach his expectations. He was

a lover of sermons—to listen to men discourse on the best and highest things was to him an unspeakable delight, and of all the preachers he had heard during a period of sixty years none were he maintained—superior to those of his own denomination.

He was a lover of the House of the Lord. With him it was something more than a *duty* to attend the services of the sanctuary, –it was a positive delight. When he was approaching his four-score years, his spiritual appetite was as healthy and strong as in any period of his religious life. Rarely was his seat vacant when a service was held. Even when his sight was getting dim, and he could not clearly see his way to the chapel, by the use of his stick he would find the hill that leads to Zion. He could honestly declare, “I love Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth.”

As a local preacher, his services were most acceptable. He has often told the story of his early connection with the Looe Circuit, where, before the establishment of a horse-hire fund, he used to walk from eighteen to twenty miles and preach twice on Sunday. “They were good times then,” he would say, “but they are better to-day.” He passed into fuller light on Good Friday, 1903, being nearly eighty years old. His last Sabbath on earth was nobly spent. He attended both services, and visited the sick in the afternoon. On Tuesday he received a stroke, spoke once only afterwards, and on Friday evening he was no more. “And so He giveth His beloved sleep.”

Rev. WILLIAM HAWKEN.

MR. Hawken was the son of John Hawken, of Treginnegar Farm, St. Ervan, near Padstow, Cornwall. He was born on the 7th July, 1819. He writes of his mother as a Calvinist, and an attendant at the parish church. He says she practised much prayer, and tried to bring up her children in the way they should go. To her he was deeply attached. The father was more worldly, though he would teach them the church catechism on Sunday evenings and read a prayer with the family. His mother often said when he was young "that William would be a preacher." He says of this, "I did not like to hear it."

The exact date of his conversion is not on record, but he always spoke of it as being about his eighteenth or nineteenth year. Catharine Harris, one of our female travelling preachers, and William Brewer, the class leader in Rumford Bible Christian Society in the St. Ervan parish, were used of God in awakening his desire for salvation and in leading him to Christ. But with the strong independence which was always his, he "fought his doubts and gathered strength." He could always say that flesh and blood had not revealed the great truths to him. One scene shows him on his knees in a field on his father's farm in the night, resolving not to cross the stile before him until he knew whether there was a God or not, and, if there were, that his sins were forgiven. And there God did reveal Himself to him: and there, too, he felt,

may, heard, his call to preach. "My call," he has said a thousand times, "was as clear as my conversion." Forthwith he began an eager and irrepressible evangelism. There were family prayers and the conversion of relatives, prayers in the field with work-people, visits with praying and preaching from house to house. "I always felt," he writes, "that God had called me to seek the wandering souls of men." But let no one think this work was done easily. Let no one say, "Yes, William Hawken could do that. It was his way. It was natural for him." Throughout his life it was a struggle; it was always at the cost of pain. He was in every way naturally a sensitive man. And only a strong will, much prayer, bringing much grace, could have brought him to accost them on the highway, and speak to almost everyone of the great salvation.

The first time he spoke from a pulpit was at Burgoes, St. Issey, in the same circuit. Thomas Tregaskis stopped in his preaching and called from the pulpit, "My friends, there is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fishes! Come up, Brother William, and give them out to the people." He went up, and told in simple speech the story of his conversion. Eleven persons were smitten by the Word and the Spirit.

He was accepted as a candidate for the ministry in 1844, and went to the Ringsash Circuit. But there being great need for him on the farm at home, great pressure from his mother and some difficulty on the doctrine of baptism, together with "despair as to my abilities," as he put it, all combined to lead him home at the year's end.

He was at home five years working hard on the farm, and entering with all his heart into the work of God in his home circuit. The desire to devote himself entirely to the ministry never left him. And in 1850 the way was open again, and Conference appointed him to the Tavistock Circuit. At the end of the year a serious illness, resulting from getting wet through and remaining for a long time in the drenched garments, compelled his retirement for a second time. For two years he was supernumerary; then, acting on medical advice, he requested that his name should be dropped. This was in 1853.

Health soon after greatly improved. He married, and settled down at Stokeclimsland, in the Callington Circuit. There the inability of the then superintendent minister to take his appointments led the quarterly meeting to turn to Mr. William Hawken with an urgent request to do the work. He consented, with some reluctance. With the late Mr. William Bray, he soon entered upon the joyous and exhausting labours of the great Callington revival. Four hundred notes of admission were given that year in the societies of that circuit. He travelled as "Another" for two years in the Tavistock Circuit, where also the revival spread; and at the Devonport Conference, 1858, he was received into full connexion. He laboured subsequently in the Bodmin, Truro, Newport (I. of W.), Tenterden, Sevenoaks, Chepstow, Hatherleigh, Padstow, Launceston, Scilly Isles, and Crondall Circuits.

He was twice married. Miss Eleanor Warne, of St. Issey, was his first wife, a true helpmeet.

and a lady of estimable character. She died at Ryde, Isle of Wight. His second wife was Miss Sarah Cooper, whom he married at Whippingham. His eldest son, Cooper Graystone, is a minister among us. His younger son, William Robert, is a local preacher in our Devonport Circuit.

One who knew him well forty years ago, a junior colleague in the Truro Circuit, Rev. Samuel G. Bryant, writes : " William Hawken was then given to much reasoning upon some of the deeper problems of divinity and philosophy, and he showed a strength and tenacity of argument, and often originality and boldness of ideas, not common among us. . . . I believe it would be found that he had anticipated in a hazy fashion some of the conceptions of Lotze and other metaphysicians. Above all other fine qualities of the man of forty years ago, the most obvious and attractive were his perfect simplicity of heart and devotion to Christ. His religion was most real—it permeated him like light and air ; he lived in it."

William Hawken was for a number of years a regular attendant at Conference. He frequently contributed to the debates, in which he took the keenest interest. His views were sometimes those of a party of one. Sometimes his judgment was proved in after years correct. He claimed, and with probable justice, to have first advocated a Board of Finance and an Examination Committee. He was never a popular preacher in the sense of being a Conference star, or being in much request as missionary deputation, or show preacher for special occasions. The occasional modern abuse

of the pulpit and platform by rhetorical displays and æsthetic entertainments he did not so much as understand. He craved first, conversions, and next sought to instruct the people in Christian doctrine. For him no office in the administrative departments of his church ever opened its doors. He sat on no committee, and never sought for position or circuit. He did on occasion give way for other men. He was sometimes the victim of misrepresentation, and more than once suffered acutely from the mis-statements of others.

He was superannuated in 1895. He lived in retirement at Devonport with his wife, his younger son, and daughter-in-law, who were most devoted in their ministrations. He was full of the spirit of prayer. He maintained his interest in the Connexion up to the last. In the early spring, on Saturday, April 25th, he was smitten with double pneumonia. He suffered great pain in the last days, but his trust in God was never shaken. He was bright and clear in intellect. He did not enjoy the raptures he had hoped to, when in earlier years he thought of the time of his going. But there was no mistrust, no doubt. He was constantly praying. He listened intently on the last Sabbath of his life, May 3rd, his last day on earth, to his son's reading parts of John xix., Rev. xxi. and xxii. He looked up when the reader ceased, and said with emphasis, "There! I never had so much faith in all that you have read as I have now." When asked on Sunday evening if the Saviour was with him, he smiled and answered, "Yes," with a look and tone which said, "Of course he is." The end came forty minutes

after midnight on Sunday, May 3rd, 1903. He was thus within about two months of his eighty-fourth birthday.

“Wherever he was, he would always make himself felt; he was that kind of man—an irrepressible man—because he had one great passion, and that was to save and win souls.” So spoke Rev. J. Dymond at the funeral service, and no sentence could more aptly, more justly describe him.”—(C. G. II.)

Rev. JAMES HORWILL.

(President of Conference, 1880).

EARLY in life the subject of this sketch was brought into close association with the Bible Christians, having enjoyed the privilege of attending cottage meetings, and coming into contact with ministers who slept at his father's house. Thoughts of God and of personal religion were created by such close connections; and although the method of his initiation into the Kingdom of God was not according to his own personal desire, having had no experience of that deep, overwhelming conviction of sin, resulting at conversion in exultant, exuberant joy, the change, however, was equally real and abiding. The entrance of the truth not only gave light, but brought peace. The new impulse quickly found an outlet, and earnestly he sought the welfare of others. After serving as a local preacher, he felt impressed to give his life to the work of the

ministry. The months preceding the decisive hour, however, were months of anxiety and perplexity. An unmistakable call, a clear path, a deep con-



viction were anxiously desired, and not until these were experienced did he venture upon the work. His education was limited to that given at the

National School and at a private institution, but, although meagre, the instruction was helpful, especially that relating to the Sacred Scriptures.

Born at Morchard Bishop, March 21st, 1833, in 1853 he was sent by Conference to the Chatham Circuit, and set down as "Another." He was ordained in 1859, at Mount Street Chapel, Devonport, and within a year after his ordination he was appointed to the pastorate of Jersey, where he and his young bride received a cordial welcome. The right note was struck at the commencement, and the music of spiritual and financial progress was heard throughout the whole term of his residence on the Island. Prejudices were removed, interest was excited, souls dead in trespasses were quickened into life, and both church and congregation were brought into a most flourishing condition. In every department of church activity a wonderful improvement was effected. After an interval of twelve years he was appointed to Jersey for a second term, and again witnessed considerable prosperity. In the Shanklin Circuit his energies were directed to chapel building, whilst in other spheres he has rendered useful, effective service. From the following list it will be seen that he has travelled in some of the most important circuits in the Connexion :—Chatham, London, Jersey (twice), Shanklin, Portsmouth (twice), Torquay, Newport (I. of W.), Bideford, Brighton, Ringsash, Newton Abbot, and Swansea.

In 1874 he was appointed Secretary of Conference, and at the Conference at Bristol, in 1880, he was honoured with the Presidency. Doubtless this honour would have been conferred earlier had

he not accepted the pastorate of the Jersey Circuit for a second term. His ministerial life has been productive of some of the best results—spiritual quickening of the churches, and the restoration of wandering souls to the Great Father. The difficulties and discouragements common to the life of ministers were the accompaniments of his ministry, but he met them determinedly in the strength of his Master, and conquered. In the earlier years, when friction in societies was more prevalent than in this more tolerant, enlightened age, and when passion more than principle was the guiding, controlling force in the lives of not a few, Mr. Horwill was ever the person to play the part of mediator, to bridge the gulf between members estranged, or to effect a reconciliation. In the midst of strife and division he was always disposed to play the part of healer and peacemaker, and on more than one occasion has he been known to prevent what seemed inevitable social disaster. His ministry has been a healing, uniting, consolidating ministry—functions which by nature and temperament he was pre-eminently adapted to fulfil. Although I have never had the privilege of listening to a single sermon from Mr. Horwill, his reputation warrants the assertion that he has proved himself a workman needing not to be ashamed. In 1897 he was superannuated, but he still carries on his beneficent ministry among the churches. In 1905 he sustained an irreparable loss in the death of Mrs. Horwill, who was ever an encourager to her husband in the days of darkness and difficulty, and to whom he owed many of the best things in life.

Mr. ROBERT BULLEN, J.P.

(NEWPORT, I. of W.)

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MR. Bullen was born at Lifton, in the Launceston Circuit, on March 14th, 1834. His mother died soon after he was born, and at the age of twenty he lost his father. Up to within a few weeks of his father's decease young Bullen attended the services of the Anglican Church, and had subjected himself to the rite of confirmation. The rite, however, did not fill "the aching void," and it was not until February, 1835, during a series of special services conducted by the late Rev. W. Mountjoy, that he received any spiritual satisfaction. Soon after his conversion his uncle, who was a local preacher, induced him to take part in a religious service in a cottage adjoining a corn mill. Notwithstanding that a few thoughts had been put together, and a little preparation made for the service, when the text was announced the thoughts refused to shape themselves, the lips were silent, and the young probationer sat down confounded. He comforted himself, however, with the reflection that probably the announcement of the text might be more effective without the exposition. But he regretted such a sudden termination, and felt disposed to vow that he never again would endeavour to preach. His uncle poured into his soul the oil of consolation, and elicited the promise to accompany him to another appointment. This was at Port Gate, and here young Bullen redeemed to some extent his previous

failure. Many times since has he expressed his gratitude for that day's experience.

In 1856 his name was put on the plan of the



Launceston Circuit, but the consciousness of his limited mental attainments created a strong sense of dissatisfaction with himself. His education was confined to that given in a dame's school, and was

consequently of the poorest character. He resolved to go to Shebbear School, which was then under the management of Mr. and Mrs. James Thorne, and of their tender kindness he speaks in the most affectionate terms. His stay at Shebbear, however, was of short duration, but was not without significance. Whilst there Mr. Thorne requested him to take a service at Lake Chapel, and the service proved of such a helpful character that a few weeks after a second request was made. This was also responded to, but with much fear and trembling. When the service was coming to a close the young preacher received such a shock to his nerves that he has never forgotten the experience. "The fear of man bringeth a snare." It appears that just before closing the service Mr. Thorne was seen standing in the gallery of the chapel, and the sight of him so frightened the preacher that he wonders how he has lived to take another service. Mr. Thorne, however, must have been favourably impressed, since the next morning he, as President of the Conference, besought Mr. Bullen to fill up a gap in a circuit in Cornwall, where a preacher had broken down in health. Vainly he pleaded his incompetence, but Mr. Thorne was so insistent, that the young preacher felt no other course was open to him. Prevailed upon by Mr. Thorne to become a minister in the Connexion, Mr. Bullen offered himself as a candidate in 1858. He was appointed to the South Petherton Circuit (now Crewkerne), and here he remained three years, but before he left his health began to fail. He attributes his breakdown to being put into a damp bed to sleep when attending a District

Meeting. His next appointment was to the Newport Circuit (I. of W.), but soon after his arrival, in 1861, he was completely broken down. He was assured by his medical adviser that, unless he discontinued the work of the ministry, his life could not be prolonged. Acting upon the doctor's advice, he resigned the ministry in 1862.

He continued to live at Newport, and became a local preacher, having served in this ministry a period of forty-three years. During this period he has manifested the keenest interest in the work of the denomination on the island, and has taken a leading part in the building of several chapels in the Newport Circuit, viz., Newport, Arreton, Wootton, Porchfield, and Totland Bay. He undertook the treasurership of each of these new causes, and now has the satisfaction, notwithstanding the hours and days of anxiety experienced during the progress of the work of God, that the time and labour devoted to the tasks allotted him have been of great advantage to the circuit, the Connexion, and the Kingdom of God. During the forty-four years Mr. Bullen has been associated with the circuit he has never been absent from a quarterly meeting, unless prevented from attending by ill-health. For many years he has acted in the capacity of circuit steward, and has frequently been a member of Conference. Several times he has been a member of the Connexional and Missionary Committee, and now he is honoured with a life appointment. He was associated with the Rev. J. C. Honey in establishing the Connexional Fire Insurance, which was founded at the Newport Conference of 1881, and he has been its treasurer from that period.

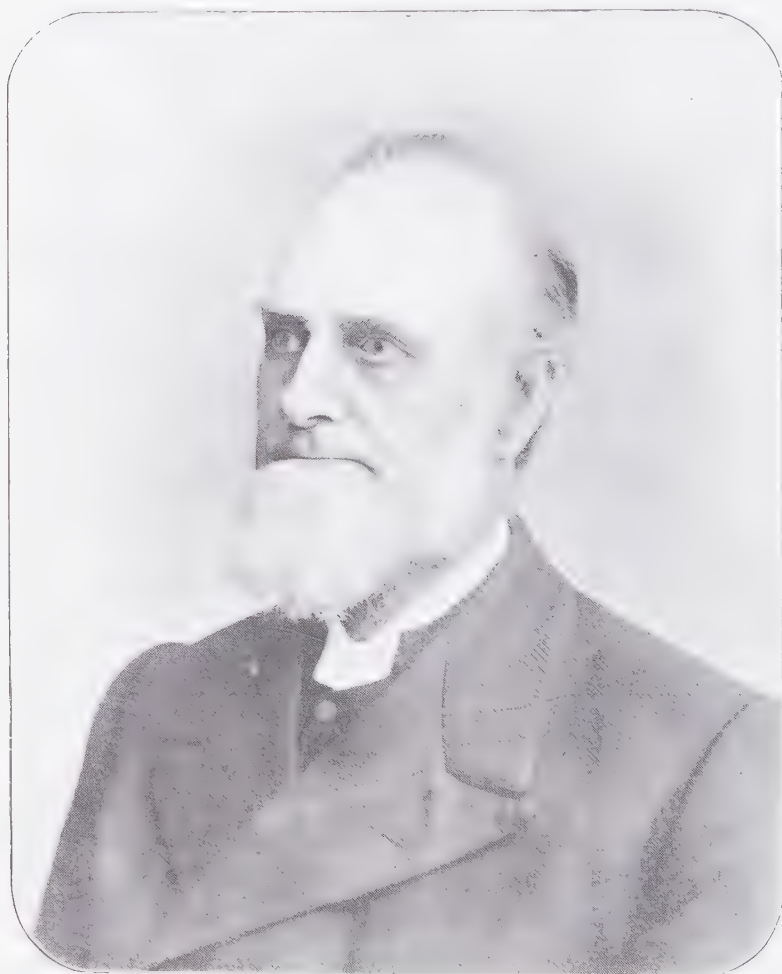
Honoured by his own people in the Newport Circuit, and honoured, too, by the members of the denomination, he has not been without honour in the town in which he has spent more than one half of his life. In 1892 he received the distinction—the first received by a Bible Christian layman in the denomination—of being made a Justice of the Peace for Newport, an honour he greatly appreciates, both for the sake of the denomination as well as for himself. Space forbids enlargement upon the services rendered by the subject of this sketch to the Newport Circuit and the denomination. To the former he has been a tower of strength, whilst to the latter his many contributions are understood only by those who know something of the anxieties associated with the duties of the treasury. Such stalwarts as Mr. Bullen are the bulwarks of religious organizations.

Rev. JOHN CLEVERDON HONEY.

(President of Conference, 1878).

HOW much we inherit, and how much we acquire as the result of personal effort, are problems insoluble. Even more so, were it possible, is the problem of the exact ratio of virtue created by resident spiritual forces, and goodness created by the play of influences flowing from environment, such as contact with persons holier than ourselves, fellowship in religious associations, and the reading of pure literature, &c. That we owe much to the working

of what may be termed the law of inheritance is evident, and those who experience a deep sense of its beneficence are not slow to confess it. Not



a Conference passes without a frank and honest confession of the debt owed to "godly parents." The subject of this sketch, like many another, owes much to his parents, both of whom were

pious, Christian people, his father having been a devoted local preacher.

Born in the parish of Bridgerule, in the Holsworthy Circuit, a few miles from Shebbear, Mr. Honey may be said to have been ushered into a Bible Christian atmosphere at the beginning, and this atmosphere has encircled him from that hour to the present. Trained and disciplined amidst the scenes of the denomination's early triumphs, the best traditions of the Connexion have been familiar to him from the first. Born on a farm, and with his father a farmer, it was the lad's intention of following agriculture as his daily pursuit. At the age of fourteen, influenced by his mother's prayers and the services of the sanctuary, the great decision was taken, and a vow was made that Christ should be his Master and Lord. At the age of eighteen he made his first attempt at public preaching in the pulpit of a village chapel, with his father, delighted with the course his son was taking, standing in the background and prompting him. He was then put on the plan, and appointed to accompany his father; but the son manifested such ability and confidence in his pulpit work, that the responsibility of the entire service was soon laid upon him. Convinced that the Divine finger was pointing him in the direction of the ministry, he submitted himself to the usual tests, and, being successful, entered the college at Shebbear, then bearing the name of Connexional Grammar School. Entering upon his probation in 1856, he received his first appointment to the Liskeard Circuit, then, as now, a circuit covering a vast area, demanding the exer-

cise of certain physical qualities which, in other and milder climes, would remain undeveloped. Here he remained three years, passing thence to a sphere whose environment was of a directly opposite character, but whose demands were by no means less exacting, especially upon the heart and mind. As second preacher he had special charge of the chapel at Waterloo, and here was provided him such an insight into the lights and shades of city life, that the memory of those days has never been forgotten. The story will bear repeating that, standing on one occasion by the Victoria Theatre, at the corner of the New Cut, he gathered around him an audience, the like of which he had never before addressed. Burning with zeal, and consumed with a passion for implanting into the souls of his motley audience some truths which should lead them to think of higher and better things, he preached with wonderful power, with the encouraging result that no fewer than thirty persons—poor waifs and strays—followed him into the chapel, many of them professing conversion. In such a locality open-air work demands courage and strength, and although Mr. Honey was not unmindful of these facts, he pursued this form of Christian service heroically, and by it has won the joy of many a spiritual triumph.

Sheerness next engaged his attention, whither he went in 1862. Here he experienced great success, the spiritual awakenings being remarkable. Three years later he returned to London, assuming the superintendency of Clapham. In this sphere he carried on work of a varied but successful cha-

acter. In the year 1868, says the *Bristol Christian Leader*, from which the following is taken, Mr. Honey went to the Isle of Wight, away from the smoke of London, amongst the grand old cliffs, foamy seas, and foliaged retreats for which the Isle has ever been famous. The limit of the Bible Christian ministry having been extended to four years, he stayed there the full time. In 1872 he journeyed again within hearing of the sea

Torquay. From thence he went to Ringsash, in Devon, in the hope that the quiet of the country might restore his then somewhat enfeebled health; but the hills of his native county and the long journeyings were found to be too trying, and, loathful though he was to exchange such pleasant scenes and helpful intercourse, he was compelled, after a year's sojourn, to remove to Portsmouth. His connection with this town possesses the more interest and significance from the fact that it was there he received the highest honour it is in the gift of the denomination to bestow—the Presidency of the Conference. His year of office passed happily and quietly enough, with the preparation of a scheme for the re-arrangement of the system of missionary grants, so as to relieve the denominational Missionary Society, standing out as one of the chief incidents of the year.

The progressive town of Cardiff was Mr. Honey's next station, the year 1881 being that of his removal there. Acting readily in the spirit of benefaction shown by him who makes two blades of grass to grow where only one grew before, Mr. Honey found Cardiff with but one Bible Christian Chapel in its midst, and left it with two.

This was accomplished by, first of all, reconciling the Marquis of Bute's agent to sell a piece of land for the purpose at Cathays (two other denominations had previously tried and failed), and then erecting a school chapel on part of the site. For the object of bringing this movement to a successful issue, Mr. Honey was permitted by Conference to spend an extra year in the town, and, before he left, the building was placed in easy circumstances and plans prepared for a large and handsome chapel, which has since been erected in proximity to the school, and the scheme as a whole thus completed. Prior to Mr. Honey planting this second blade of grass, some eight thousand or ten thousand people in the Cathays district of Cardiff were without the privilege of a Nonconformist chapel of any kind in their midst. In 1886, Mr. Honey again ventured into Devonshire for a change, but was called upon by health considerations to give up his work at the end of the first year—a year which had been rendered especially pleasant by the cordial relations existing between the local Wesleyan minister and himself, culminating in the holding of a combined revival movement.

In 1887, the year of the Queen's Jubilee, he took up his residence at Plymouth, where at Greenbank there is a substantial church and a fine chapel, and where he was enabled to accomplish during his four years' stay a good spiritual work, with a prosperous increase in seat rents, attendances, etc. In August, 1891, he responded to a call from Bristol. Here—it is the least that may be said—Mr. Honey worked conscientiously

and well, ever keeping in view the goal of the city minister's life, to reach the teeming crowds around him. In the course of his varied ministerial career, Mr. Honey has had a long connection with the committee work of the denomination, and was elected to the Secretaryship of the Conference in 1877, followed by, as we have already stated, his elevation to the Presidency in 1878. It is rather a strange coincidence that, in a third of his many pastorates, he has been called upon to follow the first minister after the church's formation or erection, and thus had young churches to deal with and guide into the paths that make for spiritual prosperity and usefulness.

Mr. Honey was chairman of the Bristol District, and outside his own church's work devoted time to the children's breakfasts in the winter and to the work of the committee for the better housing of the poor. Partly through his initiative, the Bedminster Nonconformist ministers formed themselves into a "fraternal," and elected him to the post of their first secretary, in which capacity he worked with his brethren not without some blessing in united efforts promotive of Christ's cause.

Since his successful pastorate at Bristol Mr. Honey has laboured in Barry—where he was the recognised leader in the work of the Free Churches, and in a vigorous anti-liquor and anti-license campaign. From Barry he proceeded to Birmingham—a struggling mission, demanding all the energies of his body, mind, and soul. The energy and enthusiasm he threw into his work there, and the results which followed, are known to all who have followed the history of the cause in this important centre.

After the completion of his term in Birmingham, he received an invitation for a second term to Cardiff. Here he is exhibiting the same qualities of heart and mind as have made his ministerial career such a splendid success, and although the allotted age of threescore years and ten has been reached, he is still in possession of the same burning enthusiasm, the same passion for souls, the same desire to know nothing among men, save Christ and Him crucified. At the Conference of 1906, should life be spared, he will have reached his Jubilee of ministerial service, having behind him fifty years of unbroken circuit work. Of such a career, it is legitimate to be both grateful and proud.

Rev. JOHN DYMOND.

(President of Conference, 1879).

FEW men present a better combination of the best traits of a Bible Christian minister than the Rev. John Dymond. Having himself been won to Christ by the evangelistic labours of Bible Christians in the North of Devon, he early imbibed their spirit, embraced their teaching, and became a successful preacher of those truths which have been verified in his own personal experience.

Mr. Dymond was born, in 1835, in the village of Beaford, near Torrington. It was here, during early manhood, through the ministry of the servants of the denomination, that he was arrested by the Holy Spirit, made sensible of the condemnation of sin, and, after a period of spiritual darkness and

struggle, was made conscious of Divine pardon through faith in Jesus Christ, and the surrender of the heart and life to God. This experience, which was remarkably distinct and definite, marked



the crisis in his history. His spiritual nature was quickened, the life of thought and emotion was illumined and elevated, and under the lofty inspiration of new thoughts and motives he entered the sphere of Divine service.

Sedulously he devoted himself to mental culture and the accumulation of knowledge, the educational facilities during his childhood and youth having been of a meagre character. He made the Bible his chief study, possessing the conviction that he was called to the ministry of the Gospel. His ministrations attracted attention by their intensity and power, which culminated in his being engaged as a hired local preacher in the Winkleigh Mission, which is now comprised in the Hatherleigh Circuit. After some months of acceptable service in this mission, he spent a brief term in the Connexional College at Shebbear, and entered the ministry as a probationer in the year 1857. His first appointment was to the Barnstaple Circuit, and from thence he was transferred to Devonport, which at that time included the present Plymouth Circuit. His next station was at Waterloo, London, where he remained three years. He then removed to the Torquay Circuit, where he enjoyed a successful pastorate of four years. During these years Mr. Dymond was an earnest student as well as a faithful preacher. He spared himself no pains, in order that he might be thoroughly equipped for his high vocation. This application, combined with deep fervency of spirit, rapidly developed a style of preaching, which was followed by increasing success. In the year 1869 he was stationed at Jersey, where his ministry of four years was marked by much prosperity. At this period he was pastor of the Royal Crescent Church, a building with a seating capacity for 1,200 persons. On Sunday evenings the church would be crowded. Great blessing

accompanied and followed his ministry in this church, and when the Connexional term expired, necessitating his removal to another sphere, not a few felt the wrench was almost as much as they could bear.

From the Royal Crescent Church, Jersey, he went to undertake the pastorate of the Bristol Circuit. Here it became necessary to have recourse to chapel building to meet the requirements of the developing cause, and it resulted in the erection of the Redcliff Crescent Chapel, Bedminster, in which the Conference of 1894 held its sittings. The erection of this structure, which incurred an outlay of £6,000, occasioned a departure from the four years' limit, and by the special permission of the Conference the Bristol Circuit was permitted to enjoy Mr. Dymond's pastorate for six years. At the end of that period he entered upon the superintendence of the Devonport Circuit, which at that time embraced the Three Towns. During his administration the Bible Christian cause received great stimulus. Mr. Dymond, by his genial spirit, exalted character, large sympathies, and preaching power won the esteem of the churches beyond his own communion, and amongst the Bible Christians there is no memory more fondly cherished than his. At the end of his successful pastorate the circuit was divided into the Devonport and Plymouth circuits, and the Zion Church had so flourished that it became absolutely necessary to extend the borders, which culminated soon after his departure in the erection of the splendid chapel at Greenbank. From Plymouth Mr. Dymond went to Exeter,

where he spent seven years, and during that time the happiest fellowship existed between pastor and people. He was allowed to stay so long because during the last three years his work was divided between the pastorate and the active oversight of the Home Mission stations. Half of his time was spent in visiting these dependent stations, and by words of counsel and encouragement he succeeded in reviving many a flagging interest.

At St. James's Church, Forest Hill—a position of great difficulty and responsibility—he spent five years, the extension of time having been granted for the purpose of completing a scheme for the reduction of financial liabilities. Receiving a cordial invitation from the Plymouth Circuit, he returned to it in 1895, to remain a period of eight years, during which term the commodious premises at Embankment Road, consisting of church and school-room, were built. These premises will stand out as a monument of consecrated ability, faith, and prayer. In 1903 he proceeded to Neath, where he has entered upon his forty ninth year of ministerial service.

Mr. Dymond is well known throughout the Bible Christian Denomination, and is everywhere esteemed and loved. He has filled many positions of honour and responsibility. He was elected as secretary of the Conference in two successive years, in 1875-1876, and he was elevated to the position of President in 1879. He was appointed as one of the Bible Christian representatives at the first Methodist Ecumenical Conference in 1881, and stood upon its platform as one of its chosen speakers to address the Conference on the subject

of "Training young men for the ministry." He held the office of Home Missionary Secretary from 1886 to 1893. In this position his missionary spirit found a congenial sphere and ample scope. He adopted an energetic and progressive policy. He advocated the opening of mission stations in the populous Northern towns, where evangelistic work was much needed. As the outcome of this policy missions were established at Blackburn and Bolton, and in pursuing the same plan a mission was opened at Birmingham. Mr. Dymond's spirit is deeply and thoroughly missionary. During his earlier ministry he had strong inclinations towards devoting his life to foreign missionary work. This desire, which was not to be realised in himself, has been gratified by the fact that his second son, Francis John, dedicated himself in 1886 to the Bible Christian mission in China. He has there proved himself a devoted and heroic missionary.

As an evangelical preacher, Mr. Dymond has been pre-eminently successful. An unknown writer has said of him :—"He has no love for brilliant speech simply for the sake of its brilliancy. He studies to move men by the force of truth and not by the tricks of oratory. He speaks like a man who stands in the light, with deep and strong convictions, with a mind impregnated with Scriptural teaching, with a heart aglow with loving zeal, and with the ring of profound sincerity resounding in every utterance. But his influence is not to be measured simply by his pulpit power. His life is the best commentary on his preaching. He appears as one who, to use the expression of the Apostle, has attained unto the full stature of a

man in Christ Jesus. This sterling Christian manliness gives force to his utterances and dignifies all his actions." His long life of service to his church has been fraught with ineffable blessing, and few men in any Methodist denomination have a nobler record. Spiritual to the very core of his being, he has exercised a ministry which has produced rich and permanent results, and throughout the Connexion no name is held in greater respect than his. There are few men of his exact type now remaining. His face shines with the radiance of a Divine light within, the tones of his voice are tremulous with religious fervour, and the finest instincts of his spiritual nature are ever in tune with the music of the spheres. Without constraint, his brethren acknowledge him one of the saints of the Connexion. He treads firmly the old theological highways, is not influenced by attractive paths, the ends of which are altogether unknown, and demonstrates the relative value of his creed by incarnating it in his life. By some he would be regarded as lacking in theological breadth, but for him the "Old, old story," apart from all criticism, is quite sufficient. The stress and strain of the years have made their mark upon him : his snowy hair is indicative that the summer of life has gone. But he has had his reward, for the highest honours of the Connexion have been his. A more devoted minister the denomination has never produced, and the style and substance of his sermons have contributed to the maintenance of that evangelical fervour and zeal, which are two of the main characteristics of denominational life and history.

Mr. EDMUND MOUNTJOY (Sutcombe).

ON the sixth day of October, 1835, at Lamerton Farm, in the parish of Holsworthy, was born a child destined to exert a most wholesome religious influence, both in the pulpit and out of it. When the harvest of the world shall have been reaped, not a few will be the sheaves gathered by the devoted labours of Edmund Mountjoy. Converted in February, 1859, he has laboured in season and out of season to bring others to a knowledge of Christ. His experience prior to the spiritual change effected in his life is not unlike that of many others who "know their sins forgiven." Conviction, contrition, wrestling in prayer, and mighty struggling these were the prelude to the happy day when the peace of God first became his blest possession.

Four months after his conversion he had a reference on the local preachers' plan, and he made his first attempt at speaking in public at Tamerton, in the Holsworthy Circuit. Since then he has conducted innumerable services, preached hundreds of sermons, and, what is most gratifying of all, led scores to the Cross of Christ. The sphere of his labours has not been limited to his own district. He has preached in every chapel in the Holsworthy and Shebbear Circuits, and has travelled as far afield as Launceston, Kilkhampton, Hatherleigh, Tavistock, Bideford, and Southmolton. In the days of young manhood he delighted to spend his evenings in conducting revival services in the local churches, and many were the souls

won for Christ as a result. An experience at Holsworthy one Sunday night, when several at the prayer meeting were converted, made an indelible impression upon his heart, and fired him



with an intense zeal to seek the souls of men. Many a thrilling story he could relate of battles fought and victories won — of soul struggles, strong crying and tears, followed with inexpressible joy. He devoted several weeks in labouring for the

Baptists at Germansweek, with the result that between thirty and forty surrendered to Christ.

Soon after being placed on the plan he was appointed class leader, and this office he has filled ever since. In 1864 he was elected circuit steward, and attended the Plymouth Conference as the representative of the Holsworthy Circuit. He was also appointed representative to Conference in 1865, 1884, 1885, 1889, and 1890. A loyal Bible Christian, his interest in the denomination reveals itself in multifarious forms. A robust Christian of a healthy type, he pours out in service to others the wealth of his own life, and his soul is never more delighted than when the vision is his of witnessing men and women pressing forward to surrender their lives to the Master. His ministerial service as local preacher covers a period of forty-six years, and during that time only three appointments has he failed to keep because of the weather. In sunshine or rain, calm or storm, amid biting winds and blinding snow, he pursued the line of duty, which, evidently, to his conscience, was the line of least resistance. One Sunday night he was the subject of a bitter experience. He was returning from a service at Derril, in the Holsworthy Circuit. Deep snow lay on the ground, and the air was bitterly cold. He mounted his saddled horse, and started for home, but ere he reached the homestead the frosty air attacked his feet, and the skin—the “outside shell,” as he terms it—came away from the flesh.

A wonderfully-entrancing story Edmund Mountjoy has to tell, and one would that space in this volume permitted the telling. As one listens to

the tales of heroism and suffering and conquest, one is delighted with the thought that here is a man—unclerical, unordained, unrecognised by the wise and the mighty, who bears upon his heart the burdens of others, and who, in “labours more abundant,” is a true spiritual successor of the Apostles, willing to spend and be spent in that service which affects the highest interests of men, both in this life and in “the life everlasting.” Such men as he are the salt of the earth.

The following is from the pen of Mr. T. Ruddle :—
For more than twenty years Mr. Edmund Mountjoy has been accepted at Sutcombe as the successor of the late William Allin, of Thuboro’ and Chapel House, his wife’s father, who, from the hour of his conversion till his death in 1875, was the greatest religious force in his own neighbourhood. Mr. Mountjoy belongs to a type that unhappily is becoming rarer as the years pass by. A yeoman, living plainly on his own little farm, afraid of no hard work, believing that neither the rough hand nor the coarse jacket disgraces a man, that falsehood, treachery, and impurity are the things that defile, courting no man’s smile, fearing no man’s frown, trusting in God and doing what he believes to be right, he is a survival of what was best in early Methodism, and in the Puritanism of an earlier date. In politics he is an uncompromising Liberal, and in the darkest hours of the Liberal eclipse was true to his political faith. Plain in fare and plain in dress, he is yet one of our most generous givers; and those who have need of help, and many who really have no pressing need, know his address and remember it. As a local

preacher he is earnest, intelligent, and very impressive—never more so than when, casting aside the trammels of traditional pulpit form, he pleads the value of religion, and a steadfast faith in Christ, by reminiscences of his own experience. No one would contend that Mr. Mountjoy is an utterly faultless character; only soulless, colourless people are free from flaw. Living all his life in a remote country district, it was impossible to escape some taint of prejudice and narrowness. But if at any time his judgment has been at fault, no one could deny his earnest integrity of purpose. Men like him have always been, and are even yet, the pride and strength of our fatherland and our faith; and all will join in the hope and prayer that when his work is done, his children and his children's children may be in their turns faithful witnesses of the Truth in which their father lived.

Rev. ROBERT GROSE.

THIS veteran minister was born on the 17th of February, 1830, at Polskeys, then a small hamlet in the parish of Roche, Cornwall. It has been allowed to fall into "ruinous decay," and consequently is now "without an inhabitant." He was the youngest of a family of seven—six brothers and one sister.

When about eleven years of age he entered into the fold of the Good Shepherd, and became one of His tender lambs. The spiritual atmosphere of Tremoderett Sunday School was no doubt the

principal factor in leading him to early discipleship. A few young disciples used to meet in a room for the purpose of singing favourite hymns, and offering simple prayers to "the great Father in heaven." In his boyhood he had a narrow escape



from death by falling into a deep pool, and must have been drowned had he not been rescued at the important crisis.

When a youth he signed the temperance pledge, and became a member of the juvenile branch of

Rehabites. His parents and a brother died within a month of each other, before he was quite thirteen. In consequence of that sad event the home was broken up, and the furniture and the things on the land were sold, and his brother with himself went to reside with a married brother. His early education was received at the parish school and in the old Graca Bible Christian Chapel, in which a day school was kept by a very rigorous master.

The influence of change of residence, distance from the chapel, with a lack of oversight of "the elders of the church," were detrimental to his spiritual life, which by degrees dwindled, until his connection with the church ceased, and he sought in the world what it was impossible to find. Five or six years were sadly misapplied. They were years of unrest, deep regret, and bitter compunction. When about twenty-one, on a Sabbath morning, in the new Graca Chapel, he "returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul," literally wept his way to the Cross, and fully surrendered himself to the Christ. From that time he gave himself to reading and study, and soon began to engage in Christian service. At length his name appeared on the circuit plan, but without his consent. Preaching appeared to be too great an undertaking for him, and with a view of freedom from its responsibility he went to reside at Harrowbarrow, near Callington. He soon became a class leader, also a teacher, and treasurer of the Sunday school, and it was not long before he had appointments on the circuit plan. He made no other attempt to flee from the work, but continued to "preach Christ crucified" with increasing delight

throughout the station. After about two years the ministers and leading friends advised him to offer for the ministry. At first he could not entertain the advice on account of the greatness of the undertaking, but after a fuller consideration he decided to place himself in the hands of the church.

He entered the ministry at the Conference of 1857, and was received into full Connexion at Hicks Mill, 1861. Two years after he was united in marriage to Miss Rickard, the elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Rickard, of West Harrowbarrow Farm, Calstock. He has laboured in the following stations: Tiverton, Hatherleigh, Truro, Helston, Looe, Padstow, Kingsbrompton, Liphook, Northlew, Ringsash, St. Columb, Chagford, Callington, and Somerton. Mr. Grose has occupied all the secretaryships in connection with districts. For some years he was secretary to the Examining Committee, and for many years in succession chapel secretary in four districts: the office was only vacated when he retired from full work.

Mr. Grose has made use of the pen. He has written several memoirs of leading friends, some articles, and a few sermons for the Bible Christian Magazine. Most of the sermons were preached to, and published by request of District Meetings. He has been advised to publish a volume of sermons, but has never given the matter serious thought.

“In weakness, and in fear and in much trembling,” he has served the church of his choice, and strength has always been vouchsafed to enable him to make a “good profession before many

witnesses." He values much the judgment of the Conference as expressed in the resolution relating to his superannuation. He has always endeavoured to act the part of the peacemaker, and has done his utmost to escape personal contentions. Steady, methodical, with a strong desire to do to-day what ought not to be left till to-morrow, he has been a successful circuit minister, having determined to do his work as perfectly as human strength and ability would permit. He ever had the consciousness of the necessity of always doing his best, in order to minimise, as far as possible, his natural and other defects. Since his retirement from circuit work he has not been by any means idle. He still serves the churches, and has had the honour of being President of the local Free Church Council. Municipal work too has claimed his attention, and he is chairman of the Burial Board, a member of the Board of Guardians, and a member of the Higher Education Committee. In addition to these forms of work, Mr. Grose has rendered most welcome service in the Tavistock Circuit by taking several Sunday appointments. The pulpit has still for him its old charm and fascination, and he is never happier than when, from behind its sacred desk, he breaks to the people the Bread of Life.

Rev. ROBERT SPENCER.

M R. Spencer was born at Draycott, Somerset, Nov. 7th, 1836. His father was a farmer, and the associations of his earliest years gave him the familiarity with rural pursuits and the knowledge of rural affairs that never left him. His boyhood seems to have been of the typical English type. Some of the pranks which he used to relate, with very evident relish, in later life, give us a glimpse of a boy full of fun and mischief, but fearless and truthful—the stuff out of which England's best sons have always been made.

While a mere youth he was converted at Priddy Chapel, and during the pastorate of Francis Martin he became a local preacher. To equip himself a little better for such work, he determined to spend a short time at Prospect School, Shebbear. Here he attracted the attention and won the full confidence of James Thorne, who thought he saw in the farmer-student the material for a successful minister of the Gospel; and so, when a hired local preacher was needed in the Northlew Circuit, Robert Spencer was chosen for the work. The result entirely justified the choice; and Mr. Thorne now pressed the young man to offer himself for the full work of the ministry. In exact keeping with his character through life, the candidate professed no special qualification for the work, nor the consciousness of any direct appointment to it, beyond the deliberate conviction of such a man as James Thorne; and when asked to narrate his call to the

ministry he turned round, and pointing to his late head at Shebbear, said, "There is my call." Some of the older preachers, whose piety and sincerity were above suspicion, but whose spiritual instincts



were not acute, thought such an answer unsatisfactory. If, however, we contrast such a profession with the strong protestations we too often hear on such occasions, and then contrast the subsequent life and work, we shall detect, unless we are ex-

ceptionally dull, the difference between the ring of the true metal and the false. In this way Robert Spencer became a Bible Christian minister in 1858.

As a young man he travelled in the Chagford, Kilkhampton, and Launceston Circuits, and as pastor in the Liskeard, Bodmin, Barnstaple, Holsworthy, Kilkhampton, Launceston, Tavistock, and Barnstaple (second appointment) Circuits. At the Conference of 1892 he was elected, in his absence, governor of Shebbear College, and this post he held till August, 1900, when he was compelled by serious illness to retire. He outlived his resignation less than two years, passing away at Ilfracombe, April 28th, 1902. He was interred in Barnstaple Cemetery on Thursday, May 1st, Mr. C. Steleford conducting the service.

At one time and another I have talked with friends who knew him, and who had every opportunity of justly appraising his work, in each one of the above named circuits, excepting only Bodmin. The estimate is everywhere the same. There are none of those distracting contradictions which often render it very difficult, or altogether impossible, to form a right conception of some men's character and work. Everywhere Mr. Spencer is spoken of as a man endowed with clear common-sense, who never indulged in Quixotic reveries or pursued impossible phantoms, but held resolutely to the practical and practicable; of fearless integrity, who shrank from no duty because it was wearisome and disagreeable; and of untiring devotion to his work. In his ministerial labours he was confronted with some very perplexing

problems, and if he did not always succeed in solving them and putting what was wrong right again, at any rate he made an honest attempt to do so, whatever the cost might be to himself. Chapel-building was never a hobby or craze with him. He only undertook it when it was obviously the wiser and safer course. Holsworthy and Barnstaple Chapels are sufficient proof he could succeed when he tried.

But chapel-building was less his work than church-building. In nearly or quite every case he left the society more united, healthier, and stronger than he found it. At Shebbear the text which consciously or unconsciously became the motto of his daily life was that which the writer chose for a memorial service, "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much." The very circumstances that were sometimes alleged against him as a fault were his highest praise. It was said that he did not get about among the people of the Shebbear circuit, nor preach at the different chapels. It is well known that while at Barnstaple Mr. Spencer met with a serious accident, and that from that time onwards preaching became a very exhausting work for him. And after he came to Shebbear he found the manifold duties of his new office so exacting as to leave him physically incapable of preaching, except at rare intervals, but he was always to be found at his post.

Again, Mr. Spencer has been blamed for his rigid economy in conducting the affairs of the college. Let it be remembered that he was then

acting for others. Happy is that steward against whom it is alleged that he was more careful of his master's goods than of his own ! While Mr. Spencer was governor the college enjoyed unbroken prosperity. He won the respect and confidence of masters and pupils alike ; and if there are a few, a very few, who find fault with his management, they are men—not boys—whose blame does any man more credit than their praise.

At Shebbear his name will be remembered along with James Thorne's and John Gammon's, and the fruit of his toil will be seen after many days. As I think of those eight years, the faces of Mr. and Mrs. Spencer come up vividly to mind, and I am constrained to say—"An honest day's work honestly done." And now he rests, and his works do follow him.—(T. R.)

CHIEF JUSTICE WAY (Australia).

IN the year 1850 there sailed for South Australia a minister named James Way, to whom was committed the task of opening a mission there, in connection with the branch of Methodism known as Bible Christian. It might have been said of this pioneer missionary, as truly as of Abraham, that "he went out, not knowing whither he went." His only prospects, on the human side, were toil and privation. Anxiety and hardship were certain, both for himself and his brave wife, with a stern struggle probably to bring up their young family. Little did he imagine,

as he went on board, that within less than twenty-six years his eldest son, then a lad of fourteen, who was left behind for the time at an English school, would be Chief Justice of the colony to which the rude sailing vessel of those days was about to carry him.



Two years later Samuel James Way followed his father to Adelaide. Having entered a lawyer's office, he was admitted to the Bar in 1861. He came rapidly to the front in the courts, his chief rival being, curiously enough, a son of the first

Congregational minister who landed in the colony. He was one of the first Australian lawyers who came to England to advocate an appeal before the Privy Council. His visit for that purpose was paid in 1869, and two years later he was created Queen's Counsel. In 1875 he stood for Parliament, and within a few months of his election won the Attorney-Generalship also. In March, 1876, before he had quite reached his fortieth birthday, he was appointed Chief Justice of South Australia, in succession to the late Sir R. D. Hanson. He received the high distinction of being selected by the Governments of the various Australian colonies to represent United Australia on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, according to the new scheme for utilising the experience of the colonial Bench in the hearing of appeal cases from Greater Britain.

One of the duties of a Chief Justice is to supply the place of the Governor, when the latter happens to be absent from the colony, or during the interval between the departure of one Governor and the arrival of his successor. This duty fell early to the lot of Chief Justice Way, who was actually called upon to dissolve the Parliament of which he had himself been a member—an incident which has only occurred on one other occasion in the history of British Legislatures—viz., in the dissolution of the Long Parliament by Oliver Cromwell.

Since his appointment, he has administered the Government no less than nineteen separate times. He has many times declined the honour of knighthood; but in 1890 he accepted the rare distinction

of the permanent Lieutenant-Governorship, a title which had never previously been conferred in the history of South Australia, and in only one or two other instances in any other province of Australasia.

Of his skill and learning as a lawyer and a judge it is obviously impossible for a layman to speak, though it is equally impossible for any one, however innocent of legal training, to read such a brilliant record without forming conclusions. And those who have the right to express an opinion have described him as one of the ablest judges in His Majesty's dominions, and have eulogised in the highest terms those qualities of clearness and breadth of vision, capability, sound judgment, and integrity, which are perhaps of special importance in the development of the constitution of a young colony.

Yet, with all this, he is as far as possible removed from the pedantry of a mere lawyer. He has a high ideal of citizenship, and does not conceive the sphere of his public service to be limited by the walls of the Supreme Court. Almost every important moral and intellectual interest in the colony owes much to his support. If any society were to elect him as its president under the impression that he would be a mere figure-head, it would quickly find its mistake. Whatsoever his hand finds to do he does with his might. As the *South Australian Register* said the other day, in an article which claimed to be simply recording the language of sober truth without panegyric, "Although he is pre-eminently a man whom his fellow-colonists delight to honour, there

are, we fancy, few people who fully realise the debt of obligation under which the province has been placed by him. We have become so accustomed to see him occupy the highest offices in the land, taking the lead in all public movements associated with the intellectual, social, and religious life of the community, and actively identifying himself with the principal philanthropic and educational institutions in the city, that we are apt to think somewhat lightly of the valuable services rendered by him to the colony. We venture to say that there is scarcely a man in Australia to compare with him in versatility, vigour, and public-spiritedness. Now and then are to be heard murmurs on the score of his doing too much—of his being a monopolist of offices of influence and responsibility; but open censure is dumb in presence of the fact that everything he undertakes is done well. There is no room for the suggestion that in any of the important positions he occupies he is usurping the places of men better qualified to fill them.”

The multiplicity of his interests was perhaps never more clearly illustrated than on his return from a tour round the world a few years ago. Although he had only just recovered from a severe attack of pneumonia, which seized him in Japan, he kept the reporters of the daily papers busy for weeks. One night he would be lecturing on the Methodist Ecumenical Conference, which he had attended in Washington; next day he would give the Committee of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum particulars of similar institutions that he had visited in America; another evening he would be

meeting the Freemasons, and bearing them the greetings of lodges he had visited in many lands ; next you would find him describing to the Bureau of Agriculture a model farm over which he had been taken at Ottawa ; presently you would be reading reports of his lectures to the Natives' Association and the Y.M.C.A.—not to mention the Gardeners' Association, and other societies of a less general scope. It is easy, no doubt, for a practised lawyer to “get up” any subject at short notice ; but here it is not a case of cramming, but of the zeal of a many-sided man who is really interested in every subject he touches.

Though a diligent student and an insatiable book-lover, he has not sought fame by authorship. Yet there is a “distinction” about his speeches, given commonly from the briefest of notes, that reveals the possession of no ordinary literary skill. And, while neither a Horace nor a Virgil, he is certainly a Mæcenas. His gifts to the Picture Gallery and his services to the University of Adelaide, of which he has been for several years the Chancellor, show his earnest devotion to the cause of art and letters. His school studies—he was educated at the Bible Christian School at Shebbear, Devon, and at a private school in Kent

were supplemented by his own reading in later years, for he had no opportunity of an academic training. He worthily bears, however, the high distinction of the honorary D.C.L. of Oxford, where he formed one of a distinguished group admitted to that degree at the Encenia of 1891.

His amazing capacity for work would be impossible but for the apparently inexhaustible

physical energy that feeds it. Yet this, in a measure, he owes to his own good sense and determination. As a youth he was not strong, but, believing that gymnastic exercises would do him good, he applied himself to them with such happy results that now he can tire out much younger companions in a day's sight-seeing or mountain-climbing.

The late Dr. R. W. Dale, in the *Impressions of Australia* which he published not many years ago, described as "felicitous" Mr. Froude's reference to "the charming and accomplished Mr. Way," and went on to say that the Chief Justice was not only charming and accomplished, but had "a positive genius for hospitality." To a stranger the use of the word "genius" in this connection might seem extravagant, but not to any one who has ever had the pleasure of staying at Montefiore.

There is a kind of hospitality, lavish enough and generous in its way, which is possible to any one who can afford to engage a good cook. But few hosts have ever cultivated hospitality into a fine art to such a degree as the Chief Justice of South Australia. And if genius means "an infinite capacity for taking pains," the word is certainly in place here, for no detail is too insignificant to be attended to, if only the comfort and pleasure of the guest may be enhanced thereby. Whether prince or preacher, he will meet just the very people whom he would get most pleasure in meeting, and his path will be smoothed to see—often in the company of his host himself, in spite of his scanty leisure—just the very insti-

tutions and features of colonial life which would be of greatest interest to him.

The readiness of the Chief Justice to take any amount of trouble for the sake of his friends comes out in many ways—notably in his custom, so consistent now that it might almost be called a habit, of closing his Monday's programme, however full, by writing letters until two in the morning to catch the English mail.

In 1897 he visited the home country, where he was warmly received by his many friends. During his stay on this occasion he received from Cambridge University the honorary degree of LL.D. In 1899 he was made a baronet—an honour which few have more richly deserved. His interest in the work of the denomination at home has invariably been of a practical character, and no visitor at the Annual Conference has received a more cordial and enthusiastic welcome. His munificent gift to Shebbear is only one of the many tokens of his unfailing interest in and love for the denomination, of which he is so distinguished an ornament. Loyalty to the church of his fathers is one of the distinguishing characteristics of his religious life. In spite of all temptations to belong to other denominations, he remains a Bible Christian. He is no bigot, as the treasurers of many Anglican as well as Nonconformist funds would gladly testify; but he has not yet seen any reason why he should withdraw his ecclesiastical allegiance from the little church in which he was born. Though honoured with the personal friendship of some of the most distinguished leaders of society in London, as well as in other cities, he could yet

tell the Bible Christian Conference, which he visited at Plymouth in 1891, that the reception it gave him he regarded as the greatest honour of his life. In the words of a well-known American journal, "while his abilities and exalted position would entitle him to be presented to the American public as worthy of the highest respect, he is to be honoured particularly for adhering to the comparatively small body in which he was trained. This is an example which should bring the blush of shame to many persons in the United States, who, without any pretence of change of doctrine, when attaining prosperity, have turned their backs upon the church which made themselves and their parents all that they are, and entered denominations which they fancied could give them a little better social standing. Chief Justice Way has successfully proved that merit and magnanimity can make a standing which is not only independent of adventitious aids, but can bring them, when they are no longer needed, obsequiously to do him homage."—(H. W. H., in "Osborne Magazine," 1897).

Rev. WILLIAM BLAKE LARK.

(President of Conference, 1882 and 1898).

ONE of the prettiest of the many pretty places in Cornwall is the little township of Fowey, and here, on December 1st, 1838, the subject of this sketch was born. At the age of fifteen he was "born again," under the ministry of the late Rev. F. W. Bourne. His

birth into the spiritual world was not only of moment to himself, but to others, as his ministry has fully demonstrated. At the age of sixteen he



commenced to preach, and made his first attempt at Elburton, in the Plymouth Circuit, before a congregation numbering seven souls—two men, one woman, and four children. With youthful

earnestness and zeal, he exhorted the little company to "flee from the wrath to come"—an exhortation frequently heard at that time from budding preachers, but rarely heard to-day. His next pulpit effort was at Zion Chapel, Plymouth, and here he had an experience which he has never forgotten. In the congregation were several local preachers, who were accustomed in those days to wear white neckties. These symbols of purity produced such an effect upon the lad that he was almost overwhelmed, and for several days after he was seriously ill.

He became a candidate for the ministry in 1859, and was sent to the Redruth and Camborne Circuit. Here he remained two years, and then proceeded to London. Exeter was the next scene of his labours, and here he became popular by delivering a series of lectures on the Bible. These attracted large audiences, and the commodious sanctuary was crowded every Sunday evening. During his ministry at Exeter he married Miss Chanter. From Exeter he proceeded to Jersey, where he spent one of the most happy and successful terms of his ministry. The church at the Royal Crescent was then in a most flourishing condition, and every Sunday evening was witnessed the spectacle of hundreds of young men and women crowding the galleries of this historic sanctuary. A similar sight was seen at Brougham Road Church, Portsmouth. During his ministry there he delivered a series of discourses on "Christianity and Free Thought," and these created such interest that difficulty was experienced in accommodating the crowds that gathered. It is said that after the first lecture,

such was the excitement generated, it was necessary to admit seat-holders by a side door half-an-hour before the commencement of the service. The other spheres in which he has exercised his ministry are Holsworthy, Penzance, Bristol, Newport (I. of W.), twice, Devonport, and Aberavon. At the Conference in 1900 Mr. Lark was appointed governor of Shebbear College. In addition to his pulpit and pastoral work, Mr. Lark was for many years a contributor to the Connexional Magazine, the articles above the signature "B. W. Kral" being from his pen. Early in his ministry Mr. Lark made a favourable impression on the minds of his ministerial brethren and the Connexion generally, and this impression deepened with the passing of the years. In 1880 he was elected Secretary of Conference, and re-elected in 1881. The highest honour his brethren could bestow was given the following year, when he was elected President. This honour was conferred a second time in 1898. In company with a few others, he has represented the Connexion at each of the Ecumenical Conferences.

The subject of this sketch gives a wide interpretation to the primary functions of a minister, and has but little sympathy with that narrow type of religion which is content with feeding itself upon a multiplicity of emotional gatherings, and permits the outer world to pursue its own irregular and mischievous course. Whatever his theory, the evidence is abundant that in practise Mr. Lark shows that the kingdoms of this world are also the Kingdoms of God—or ought to be—and that in devoting a portion of his time to the discussion

of great public questions having moral bearings he is true, not only to the highest instincts of his nature, but to the spirit and temper of the Gospel of Christ. The platform has been the scene of some of his greatest triumphs. Here he has free play, and many of the conventionalities of the pulpit are ignored. Wit, humour, repartee, scorn, denunciation, and ridicule are all brought into play when dealing with some burning question affecting the liberties and lives of the people. Deliberate in speech, and with every syllable distinctly articulated, he thunders forth his denunciations against political and social wrongs with all the force of his body, mind, and soul. Against the liquor traffic he has waged an unceasing warfare, and few men in the Connexion have done better service than he in disclosing to the general public the attitude of the denomination towards this accursed traffic. He has been its inveterate foe for many years, and his hatred has deepened with the growth of his own observation and experience of the deadly results of this pernicious trade.

As a preacher, platform speaker, and debater, Mr. Lark has been in the front rank for a quarter of a century. His effectiveness as a speaker is not to be found either in the originality or depth of his thought, the beauty of his diction, or the delicacy of his phrasing. In listening to him one is impressed rather with the thought that he is more concerned with driving his message home to the heart and conscience than with the particular manner in which the message shall be presented. Plain, direct, cogent, there is no possibility, in

listening to Mr. Lark, of being led into a fog, and of being enshrouded in an atmosphere where even a metaphysician or a psychologist could not discover his whereabouts. In a sermon heard by the writer a few years since the thought was so clear and the language so plain, that any ordinary lad could understand what Mr. Lark desired to communicate. The thought occurred, after hearing that sermon, "that the wayfaring man, though a fool," had no occasion to err. And it is these qualities of plainness, clearness, directness of thought and expression, joined with an impressiveness of manner which few of his ministerial brethren seem to command, which have given him his position and influence as a preacher and platform speaker. He is one of that limited band of front-rank men who, for about a third of a century, have been potent, determining factors in the life and history of the denomination. That band is rapidly passing out of the ranks—their day is done, their labour ended, and the duties and responsibilities now rest upon other shoulders. In this band of workmen, so rapidly passing into peace and quiet, the subject of this sketch has been no insignificant member. He has played many parts, and played them well; and now, after about forty-seven years of active service, fraught with blessing to untold numbers, the consciousness is given that in "labours more abundant" he has been faithful to the divinely-committed trust.

Whilst the swiftly-passing years have not been without their effect upon him, robbing him of Nature's protecting mantle and carving lines upon brow and face, he still gives evidence of possessing

many of the attributes of youth. His heart is still young, his outlook upon life and society optimistic, and the humour of existence still a potent factor in the varied content of experience. One of the most modest of men, and as brotherly as he is modest, his counsels in the Connexion have always been weighty and valuable. That he has the "defects of his qualities" goes without saying; but, survey him in body, mind, and soul—measure him in the totality of his being, and the conviction is irresistible, that he stands among the peers of the Methodist realm, one of the noblest of his time.

Mr. BENJAMIN MICHELL (Redruth).

AT Hicks Mill, on November 13th, 1840, of humble parents, was born a child endowed with certain qualities, whose exercise brought their possessor into the goodly land of commercial prosperity and influence. Bereft of his father when quite a child, he owed much of what was best and noblest in his life to his sainted mother, who was one of the first members of the famous Hicks Mill Society. Accompanying his mother to the chapel when only a lad, it may be said that, from that time to his death, he did not wander beyond the influences of the Bible Christian Connexion, with which he was more or less closely identified for about forty-six years. Education, as at present understood, was practically unknown to him, the facilities for

mental improvement and culture in some parts of the Delectable Duchy at that period being meagre indeed. Not that they would have been taken advantage of even had they existed, since



the weekly income to the household was of such a limited character, that little could be spared for education. To Mr. Michell, when a lad, education was simply a word destitute of any great mental significance, and to him the fact was simply un-

known. Early in life—alas! too early—he was compelled to bend his back in hard toil, with but a small pittance as remuneration, his wage averaging the noble sum of four shillings and sixpence per month. The lad, however, was not daunted, but measured life according to the great principle which invariably creates hope and inspiration, and bore the burden and performed the drudgery “for the joy that was set before him” in improved circumstances, better social conditions, and the acquisition of a fair share of the world’s wealth.

His first permanent religious impressions were received during the ministry of the late Rev. William Luke. In 1850, when a lad of ten, occurred an incident which excited his interest in the Bible Christians and their work. At Bissoe Bridge a publican arranged for a wrestling match—a common form of amusement in Cornwall in those days—his supreme purpose being to damage, if possible, the good work then being done at Hicks Mill Chapel. But meeting the “devil on his own ground” and, alas! what a vast acreage he has! the Rev. W. Luke, Mr. Thomas Verran, David Martin, and other spiritual stalwarts, went down to the Bridge and held a prayer meeting. Space forbids a description of all that took place, but suffice it that the result more than justified the bold, heroic attitude of these “masters in Israel,” since a mighty religious awakening occurred, and scores of persons found relief at the Cross. Men in their shirt sleeves struggled mightily for the blessing—they fought, poured forth their souls in bitterest agony, and conquered. The work affected the children in the school, and amongst those who

were deeply impressed were William Oates—who entered the ministry in 1866, and is now residing at Neath—and the subject of this sketch. It was not, however, till six years after this revival that young Michell took the decisive step, and prayed the prayer of the sin-stricken penitent. His first ticket of membership was received from Rev. W. Hawken, in 1859. He signed the pledge, joined the Band of Hope, and became associated with one of three mission bands.

Leaving the historic soil of Hicks Mill, Mr. Michell went to reside at Redruth, where a chapel was in course of erection. Here he used his gifts with zeal, and became superintendent of the school, which position he filled for about thirty years. Although at that time a comparatively young man, serving an apprenticeship at the drapery business, he took the safe and sensible course of securing and paying for a pew in the new chapel, making it a point of honour to do his best to fill it every Sunday with friends and associates. The chapel at Redruth, however, for many years was a financial burden, both to the local church and to the denomination. Strenuous efforts have been put forth from time to time to reduce the liabilities, with excellent results. The original debt has been paid off, the premises greatly improved, and the electric light installed. Compared with the condition of things thirty-five years ago, it is clear to all that wonderful progress has been made, the present premises, and the church and congregation, being a credit to the town and the denomination.

Mr. Michell was an ardent advocate of Methodist Union, and had the privilege of witnessing it on

a limited scale in the Redruth Circuit. At Camborne the Methodist New Connection Church has amalgamated with the Bible Christians, and upon Mr. Michell was conferred the honour of conducting the final service in the Methodist New Connexion Chapel. A new building for the united church is now in course of erection. Having been a trustee of the new church, Mr. Michell, who worked most energetically to consummate the union of the two churches, naturally looked forward with considerable interest to the opening of the new building, and great would have been his delight had Providence prolonged his life to share in the great rejoicing. But it was not to be. Laid low by pneumonia at the Conference at Exeter in 1905, it was thought that death would have claimed him before the sessions of Conference closed. By careful nursing and medical attention he was restored sufficiently to be carried to his home, and here, it was thought, the process of recovery had begun. It was not, however, of long duration, and on the 4th of November he passed into the unseen.

Such was the respect felt for Mr. Michell by his brethren in the circuit, that he was honoured with nearly every official position. He was a local preacher of many years standing, and a class leader. The positions of circuit steward and representative to the Conference he occupied on many occasions, and for a number of years he was a member of the General Connexional Committee. He was also an active citizen, being a member of the Town Council. Like most men who have prospered in life, he owed much of his success to

his wife, who has been a true and faithful helpmeet. She comes from a family whose name has sacred associations with Hicks Mill. The very soul of a Bible Christian, Mrs. Michell maintains and perpetuates the spirit of her devoted parents (William and Mary Oates), and her home is a sanctuary—a place of rest and refreshment—for Bible Christian ministers, from near and afar. The joy of those who serve has been, and still is, hers in a remarkable degree. Such persons make oases in the desert of life, and create springs of living water in the valley of humiliation and sorrow.

There are two sons, both of whom are seeking to maintain the best traditions, and to manifest that spirit of religious zeal which seems so essential to the carrying forward of the work of God.

Rev. WILLIAM BRYAN REED.

(President of Conference, 1881).

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OF the names intimately associated with the history and development of the Bible Christian Connexion, none is more familiar than that of Reed. For more than three quarters of a century it has had an honoured place in the Minutes of Conference; and were the denomination to continue its separate existence, evidence is at hand to show that, should life be perpetuated, the name would still be there at the close of the first half of the present century. The name has been representative of some of the

noblest qualities characteristic of the denomination, and whenever and wherever it is mentioned, especially at the annual assemblies, spontaneously



there arise in the mind thoughts of prayer, devotion, spiritual strength, and saintliness. It has been, and still is, symbolic of a type of life and character redemptive and purifying.

William Bryan Reed is the son of the sainted William Reed, and a nephew of James Thorne. Related on his mother's side to the Cottles, he has also some connection with the Rattenburys, and thus is intimately associated with some of the earliest and most useful families with which the denomination has been favoured. With many of his contemporaries, he owes much to his ancestry and early environment. When but a lad impressions deep and ineradicable were made upon him, and these were strengthened as his knowledge of spiritual verities increased. After spending some time at Prospect School, Shebbear, being one of its earliest pupils, he proceeded to London, with the intention of becoming a chemist, in which occupation he was employed for some years. Upon the death of his father, he felt constrained to offer himself for the ministry, which he entered in 1860.

His forty-six years' ministry has been divided into two parts—or the one ministry has had two different spheres of service. During the first twenty-three years he exercised his gifts in ordinary circuit work, travelling in the following circuits:—Tavistock, Holsworthy, Taunton, Forest Hill, Bideford, and Torrington, Portsmouth, Holsworthy (second time), and Exeter. In 1877 he was appointed secretary of the College Committee, a position he has filled from that time to the present. Probably the best work accomplished by him during his circuit life was that achieved at Portsmouth, where he was instrumental in erecting a new church at Brougham Road—a historic place, the scene of many a spiritual triumph.

When denominational interests suggested the provision of a school for girls, which should accomplish in and for them what Shebbear was doing for boys, no one manifested a more lively, intelligent interest in the new venture than Mr. Reed. Having been favoured in early life with educational advantages surpassing those of most of his brethren in the ministry, personal experience had impressed him with the advisability of providing an institution for the education of ministers daughters and others, and thus equip them for the sacred functions of life. Women had rendered the denomination noble service in the past. Some of its greatest victories had been theirs ; and, with better mental equipment, no reason existed why these triumphs should not be repeated. In 1883 Edgehill College was founded, and Mr. Reed was appointed its first governor. To its highest interests he has given the best of his life for a period of twenty-three years, and what this means only those closely identified with the work of the institution can judge. During the earlier years, both in public and in private, the arrows of criticism flew thick and fast. In the spring term of 1887 an epidemic, which had been imported, broke out in the school, and this proved for a time a check to its prosperity. The confidence, however, felt by the parents was not shaken, as may be judged from "the fact that of 72 girls who left in May, 57 were again in residence by the middle of the Christmas term." It proved a period of great anxiety, of stress and strain to the governor, and was a severe test of the qualities of both mind and heart. Says Mr. Bourne

in "The Bible Christians—their Origin and History," referring to Edgehill College, "The governor and headmistress have remained in office throughout the chequered career of the institution to its great advantage. They have evidently sought to uphold its true interests on all occasions, according to their best judgment, and have throughout served with self-sacrificing zeal and devotion rarely equalled, and never surpassed." Edgehill College is now one of the glories of the Connexion, and such is its prosperity that difficulty is experienced in providing the necessary accommodation for those desirous of entering into residence.

In 1879 and 1880 he acted as Secretary of Conference, and in the following year was elected President. For five years he was Home Mission Secretary, an office for which his natural abilities, spiritual sympathies, and breadth of view pre-eminently fitted him. His yearly "introduction" to the Missionary Report was a revelation of the width of his outlook, his evangelistic spirit, his mental grasp, and his literary style.

It was in 1879, at the Conference at Truro, that I first saw and heard Mr. Reed. One word only of the sermon do I remember, and that word "Saul." This, if I am not mistaken, was the subject of discourse. In Providence Chapel, Kilkhampton Circuit, in 1885, I heard a second sermon. The text, I think, was, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." The impression made rightly or wrongly upon my mind at the time was that the sermon was strong, and, strange to say, tinged with Calvinism. The probability, however, is that, being a novice in things intellectual

and theological, I failed to distinguish between things that differ, and consequently drew inferences not logically justified by the premisses.

An acquaintance informs me that the subject of this sketch thinks for himself, is a wide reader, and keeps himself abreast of Biblical criticism. Possessing an open mind, truth is ever welcome, come from whatever quarter it may. A diligent student, especially of the Sacred Scriptures, fear for the "ark of God" has no place in his soul, and he is quite willing to allow the critics to do their work. Strong in the confidence begotten by spiritual association with the Highest, and believing that the great spiritual verities will remain untouched by the severest criticism, his mind is ever responsive to the truth, by whomsoever spoken. This is the attitude of a strong man, and it is the only attitude consistent with belief in the trustworthiness of our mental faculties, and the spiritual revelation made to us in Christ Jesus.

It is not easy to represent Mr. Reed in a sentence. Popularity he has never courted, neither has he made attempts at display. His strength resides in his fine character, mental qualities, and spiritual devotion. Although not at his best at a picnic, he is such an one to whom one would eagerly run in the day of distress, and be comforted. Such as he are the bulwarks of a church, and in such as he inhere the strength, stability, and dignity of organizations founded to endure.

Mr. T. RUDDLE, B.A. (Shebbear College).

IN many respects Shebbear College is the finest asset of the Connexion. To the superficial observer, who visits it on Prize Days, and forgets that it represents the growth of over sixty years, it has comparatively little to commend it in outward appearance. Many have been the expressions of disappointment at its lack of architectural symmetry and grace from those who have expected to find a stately edifice more in keeping with its fame. Some of the irreverent have even been known to advocate a clean sweep of the existing fabric, to prepare the way for a more pretentious modern building. Such critics are akin to those who solemnly suggest the transference of the entire school to another locality. To say nothing of the extravagance of these proposals, which do violence to the spirit of wise economy which has characterized the past, what is to be said of the disregard of that sentiment which means so much in the upbuilding of the individual life ! To boys who have spent some years of their lives at Shebbear, every nook and corner is alive with memories, some of them as inspiring as those associated with the more ancient halls of Eton and Rugby, or any other of the great public schools of the land.

To the generation that preceded the year 1864, the chief memories of school life at Shebbear are probably connected with the locality, with old schoolfellows, and with the Thorne family, whose devotion and force of character contributed so

greatly to the best life of the denomination. It was in that year that the illness of a Bible Christian minister at Portland became the link in the



chain of events which made Mr. Ruddle headmaster of Shebbear College.

The Rev. W. Hopper, who had been President of the Conference in 1862, was then stationed at

Portland and Weymouth. He had fallen ill, and a Mr. Beale, who was master of the British School at Portland, had frequently preached for him on Sundays. This coming to the ears of the Managing Committee of the school, Mr. Beale was told that he must pledge himself not to do so again. This promise he firmly refused to make, and as a result he had to leave Portland, though his character was of the highest, and he had proved himself an efficient teacher. Mr. Hopper was naturally distressed that his friend should suffer on his account, and, lighting upon an advertisement in the *Bible Christian Magazine* for a master for Prospect School, as the college was then called, he showed it to Mr. Beale, in the hope that the post might suit him. But an unmarried man was required, whereas Mr. Beale had a wife and family : and in other respects the qualifications did not suit him. He therefore handed it to a friend of his at Weymouth, who applied for the post, and was successful in obtaining it. It was under such circumstances that Shebbear secured the services of one who was destined to raise the school to a foremost position among the secondary schools of the West.

Mr. Ruddle came to Shebbear with a strong recommendation from no less an authority than the late Sir Joshua Fitch, who was the Principal of Borough Road Training College at the time Mr. Ruddle was a student there. Any old Shebbear boy will recognize the note of such passages as these, taken from Dr. Fitch's "Lectures on Teaching" :—"Consider what a man is likely to be worth who has not resolution enough to resist

the public opinion of his class, to refuse to pronounce the shibboleths of his party, to abstain from display and expense which he cannot afford, to emancipate himself from usages which he feels to be narrow and selfish." And again—"A school is a very unsatisfactory institution, and fails to fulfil its highest function if, however it may succeed in imparting knowledge, it does not also succeed in imparting a thirst for more, or at least a dawning sense of the inward need for mental and spiritual cultivation, whether such cultivation bears any visible relation to success in life or not." There can be no doubt that the ideal of his old chief is the one which Mr. Ruddle has kept before him through his years of self-denying service at Shebbear—namely, that the school "should be pervaded through and through by high purpose, by the spirit of work, by a solemn sense of duty, and by the love of truth."

A native of Trowbridge, in Wilts, Mr. Ruddle had been brought up among Nonconformists of the strictest sect, with the usual result that he found himself in revolt against the burdens, grievous to be borne, which were laid upon his shoulders by those who desired his spiritual well-being. He was an omnivorous reader, and his expanding mind could not fail to come under the influence of Thomas Carlyle, the greatest literary force of the third quarter of the nineteenth century, whose iconoclasm, however healthful and invigorating it has proved to the national character, was calculated to inflame rather than allay the spirit of rebellion against conventional authority.

At the age of twenty-four, with many thoughts

arising in his heart, Mr. Ruddlé came to Shebbear. Two things struck him from the first—the ultra-Puritanical observance of the Sabbath, and the exceptional character of James Thorne. The last impression continually grew deeper during the six and a half years spent under the same roof, and has continued to deepen with the ripening experience of years, “so that in the light of Mr. Thorne’s devotion, his singleness of purpose, and his Herculean labours, all other men appear comparatively small.”

Shebbear in Mr. Thorne’s day was the natural centre of denominational activity. It was also, as it still is, the head of a large and important circuit. Mr. Ruddlé could scarcely fail to be brought into touch with the life then pulsating through the villages and hamlets around him. One of the most notable of these is Sutcombe, some six miles from Holsworthy and eight from Shebbear. Not being far from the place where Mr. O’Byran had first preached at Milton Damerel, in 1815, it had felt the force of the great awakening at an early period. The preaching of Mr. James Thorne and others had transformed the entire neighbourhood, and left an abiding influence upon the lives of many of the inhabitants. Chief among these was Mr. William Allin, of Chapel House, Sutcombe Mill, who as a lay preacher had rendered invaluable service to the churches around. His grand-daughter Margaret became the wife of Mr. Ruddlé, and for over twenty years contributed not a little to the success of his work at the college. Only those who were privileged to witness the tender devotion and perfect understanding of

that home life can appreciate the magnitude of the loss sustained by her husband and six children, when, in the spring of 1892, she was called to higher service.

Amidst the duties of school life and the cares of home, Mr. Ruddle continued his studies with such effect that he graduated at London University in 1872. In the following year the Rev. John Gammon succeeded Rev. Robert Blackmore as governor of the school. He held that position for twelve years, and, under the combined efforts of the governor and headmaster, the numbers increased so rapidly that it was found necessary to add extensively to the premises. It should be noted that, at a period when Mr. Ruddle was practically single handed in the upper work of the school, successes were won which have scarcely been surpassed since. In 1879 three students secured first-class honours in the local examinations, and a fourth stood high in the second class. In the following year two matriculated at London University, one with honours. Shortly after the Dyke Exhibition was won for the college against the best schools of the West of England, and gave the winner the opportunity of a full course at Oxford. Successes like these, and many others won in the Civil Service and elsewhere, soon attracted public attention. The Earl of Portsmouth, Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Sir John Phear, and others interested in county education, readily took part in the prize givings and other public functions. Under the governorship of Rev. John Martin, advantage was taken of the facilities offered by the Government for the development of scientific

instruction. Fine new chemical and physical laboratories are the latest outcome of this movement, with the result that the college is well equipped for tuition in science. Other additions have been made to the premises during the administration of later governors (Rev. R. Spencer and Rev. W. B. Lark), so that there is ample accommodation for the pupils in residence, and every convenience for the work of education.

In the year 1891 Sir Samuel J. Way, Chief Justice of South Australia, himself an old Shebbear boy, presented to the Connexion the whole of Lake Farm adjoining the College. It was on this occasion that he said—"When the history of the Connexion comes to be written, the name of Thomas Ruddle will be recorded as one of its master-builders." Mr. Ruddle has certainly proved himself a master-builder in this sense. His old pupils are now scattered far and wide over the earth, but wherever an old Shebbear boy is met, whether it be in any of the British colonies

America, China, or any other country of the world—he generally attributes a great part of the real grit he possesses to the love of hard work and the high sense of duty instilled into him whilst at Shebbear. Nor is any boy who leaves the college true to its best traditions, as maintained by the present headmaster, if he allows himself to think that his education ends with his school life.

Several have attained to high academic honours since they left school. These would readily acknowledge their indebtedness to Mr. Ruddle for the intellectual stimulus given at Shebbear. But the value of his work is seen over a much wider

area, and in a profounder sense, than that indicated by academic distinction alone. Although he has been headmaster of a denominational school for so many years, he has never aimed at producing men of the goody-goody type; but true nobility of character has been recognized and held up to esteem wherever it has manifested itself, without regard to creed or status. The result has been the development of a sturdy manliness, which is now doing good service in every walk in life occupied by old Shebbearians.

Anomalous as it may seem to persons unacquainted with the work of the denomination, it has been an important part of the duty of the headmaster of the college to superintend the training of young men received as candidates for the ministry. So highly has this part of his work been esteemed, that students for the ministry of other churches have, in some instances, elected to receive their training at Shebbear rather than at their own theological colleges. The Bible Christian ministry has been enriched by the annual addition to its ranks of men who have sat at the feet of this modern Gamaliel, and acquired from him that breadth of view and liberality of spirit which seem to have characterized the great instructor of ancient Judea. Though neither teacher nor students have had a fair opportunity, much has been achieved, and, in looking round upon the ministers of to-day, it will be found that some of the most energetic and faithful are old Shebbear College students. True, there are notable exceptions, but these are often heard to lament that they had not the same privilege.

Mr. Ruddle has for many years past been a member of the Connexional Examining Committee, and has, therefore, had some voice in the selection of men who should go to college. His great aim has been to secure for them a longer period at college, and no one has protested more vigorously against any interference with a young man's college course to meet occasional emergencies.

As a preacher, Mr. Ruddle has rendered invaluable service to the Shebbear Circuit, and especially to the students at Lake Chapel, where he has appeared to them in another light than that in which they are accustomed to see him in the ordinary routine of school life. He has also been in demand as a preacher on special occasions in various parts of the country. His striking originality of style commands immediate attention, whilst his forceful presentation of the greatest subjects has often brought conviction to the minds of hearers upon whom little impression would be made by sermons of the more orthodox type. He was selected to preach the Conference sermon at Bristol in 1894. The late Sir Thomas Acland thought so highly of the sermon that he wrote a most appreciative notice of it, and showed it to many of his friends. Another memorable discourse was the funeral sermon of the late Rev. R. Spencer, preached at Lake Chapel by request of the family.

At the Ecumenical Conference, held at Washington in 1891, Mr. Ruddle contributed a paper on "Amusements." It was favourably reviewed by several American papers, especially by the *New York Herald*. The paper has a present-day interest for all who are discussing institutional churches.

A passage will indicate the man. "Whatever may be the duty of the church toward amusements, it is *not* her duty to be hostile to them and suppress them. It is not her duty to lay upon men a burden which the Almighty has not laid, nor to put a yoke upon those whom Christ has set free." Later comes the caution that "the church must use amusements as occasion demands, but on no account permit them to use her."

Contributions to the *Bible Christian Magazine* on various topics, chiefly literary, have been much appreciated, but of late years they have not been so frequent as formerly. Many readers will recall a delightful article on Browning's "Christmas Eve."

The most fitting conclusion to this sketch may be found in words which were uttered by the subject of it at the last Ecumenical Conference at City Road, London, in 1901. During the discussion on "The spiritual vitality of Methodism," Mr. Ruddle said, "I always think that a good test of organic life is its power to reproduce itself. I believe all scientists say that the real proof of life is—whether life can reproduce itself. The highest form of life that a man knows anything about is the Christian life, and it seems to me that the time is coming when we shall have to be tried, and all Christian forms will have to be tried, by their power to produce Christian gentlemen, and the church which cannot do that cannot live, or will not live permanently."

Judged by the lofty standard which he himself has here set, Thomas Ruddle has, in no small measure, attained to the highest form of life.
—(G. P. D.)

Rev. ALEXANDER TRENGOVE.

(President of Conference, 1886 and 1897).

..

IT may be well to state at the outset that the strenuousness of the life he lived, the multiplicity of his activities, and his manifold achievements during a period of forty-five years, make it impossible, in the space at my disposal, to give an elaborate account of the many forms of fruitful service rendered to the denomination by the subject of this sketch. Endowed with a fine physique, and gifted with an unusual variety of powers, he threw his energies into the work assigned him with a spirit of determination to succeed which commanded universal respect and admiration. He was pre-eminently a worker, a toiler on the broad deeps of human life. Activity, labour, service, were as natural to him as they are unnatural to some others. Observation has convinced the writer that not a few men are born with indolent instincts, and it is to them a form of self-crucifixion to make an effort to counteract their evil influence, and to assert the other and higher side of their nature. The subject of this sketch suffered no hindrance in his development through these impediments, his active spirit and indomitable will having made it difficult for him to be at ease when the demands for service were so imperative. To the law of inheritance his obligations were many and great, but the virtue was his of having appropriated its gifts for the highest, noblest uses, and of adding to them by

a courage, an assiduity, and a consecration worthy the highest admiration.

The wild, breezy moorland, in the parish of



Lanlivery, Cornwall, was the place to be honoured by his birth, which took place on Christmas-eve, 1840. In his infancy he was taken to Tywardreath, and here, at the age of twelve, he was converted

during a revival mission conducted by the Rev. W. Clarke. To his mother, however, he owed the generation of those impulses and principles which were the controlling and guiding forces of his life. While yet a lad he evinced unmistakable interest in Christian service, and contributed his quota to the work of the local society by faithfully distributing weekly a tract in every house. At the age of sixteen he accompanied his father, a local preacher in the St. Austell Circuit, and preached his first sermon at Tregorrick. When nineteen he was a candidate for the ministry, and in 1860 received his first ministerial appointment. In 1864 he was ordained at Plymouth, the Rev. John Brown delivering the "charge."

His first pastorate was at Aberavon, entered upon in 1867 : and in 1871 he commenced a successful term of service at Newton Abbot, where he discovered the existing debt to be greater than the cost of the original building. An occasional hearer, realising the terrible incubus this was to the spiritual work of the church, contributed the noble sum of £750, and by generous giving on the part of others, the liabilities were reduced £1,200. In 1875 he proceeded to Exeter, where a manse was erected, and £200 raised for the purpose. From thence he went to undertake the pastorate of the Bristol Circuit, and here excellent service was rendered. At the close of his term there were a full congregation and a vigorous church, eight society classes, and the income for church purposes £160 a year. In 1883 he was appointed to Plymouth, where he rendered magnificent service, both to the circuit and to the denomination. It was

during his term in this circuit that he bore the responsibilities of four of the most important offices a minister is called upon to fill. He was pastor of one of the strongest circuits in the Connexion, General Chapel Secretary, Secretary of Conference, and President. In addition to the labours attached to these offices, there devolved upon him the care and responsibility associated with the erection of the church, schoolroom, and class-rooms at Greenbank. The building of these premises was no light task, and the steps taken marked an advance in the development of the denomination in this historic circuit. For years Plymouth Circuit gave no indication of progress; it had not developed in proportion to the spirit which had been infused in earlier years. In truth, there had been retrogression, since the membership in 1876 was less than in 1856. From the date of the erection of Greenbank Chapel the circuit has made steady and continuous progress, and in one decade the membership was doubled.

Leaving circuit work for a more limited sphere, he was appointed in 1887 to the Bookroom, where, after twelve months' apprenticeship, he succeeded the late Mr. Bourne as steward. In this position he remained two terms of five years each, and was nominated for a third term; but, preferring the larger area of circuit life, where the opportunities for the exercise of his varied gifts were more abundant, he accepted an invitation to Jersey. Here he spent four happy and successful years, proceeding thence to Sandown (I. of W.), where he remained three years, and was invited for the fourth year, but a preacher of experience and

strength being required for Bristol, at the request of the Conference of 1904 he consented to undertake again the responsibilities of this important circuit. It is significant of much that, in all his pastorates, excepting that of Sandown, he has remained the full term of four years—an experience testifying to his earnestness, industry, and fidelity, and to his incessant watchfulness of the interests, both financial and spiritual, of the circuits favoured with his services.

But valuable as were his services in circuit work, they by no means limited his contributions to denominational strength and prosperity, since in other spheres he worked heroically and well. In 1879 he was appointed General Chapel Secretary in succession to the Rev. James Hinks, who, whilst secretary, was exempt from circuit duties, and therefore free to devote the whole of his time to his tasks. When the secretaryship was entered upon by Mr. Trengove he combined the duties with those of ordinary circuit work, and in this relation continued for a term of twenty years, receiving as honorarium the sum of £10 per annum. During this period many denominational interests were furthered and strengthened: and the Conference of 1899, at Holsworthy, in adopting the Chapel Secretary's report, passed a resolution, gratefully recognising the "distinguished ability with which the General Chapel Secretary (Rev. A. Trengove) had fulfilled the duties of the office during the last twenty years."

In 1885 he was elected Conference Secretary, and in the following year succeeded to the Presidency. In 1897, at Exeter, his brethren, recognising the

strenuousness of his life and service, again conferred upon him the honour of the Presidency, and the same spirit and zeal which had ever characterised his ministerial career, continued to be manifested in all departments of his work for the denomination. On several occasions he delivered the official sermon to the Conference, and for many years he did successful deputation work in behalf of the Missionary Society. A few of his sermons have been published in the *Connexional Magazine*, also articles on religious and other subjects. Whilst at the Bookroom he received an invitation to undertake the pastorate of the Adelaide Church, South Australia, but could not see his way clear to accept it.

In characterising Mr. Trengove's life and work, one must not be oblivious of certain facts which are essential to a true and just judgment. Like most of his ministerial brethren in the fifties and sixties, he entered upon his work with the most meagre mental preparation. To say nothing of an academical training, not even the best forms of literature were at his disposal. The books secured were purchased at great sacrifices, and only those who have been similarly circumstanced know how precious they were. But these drawbacks notwithstanding, Alexander Trengove lived a successful ministerial life, and the primary elements contributory to that success were his unceasing industry and his zealous devotion to duty. He was not a genius—his native mental endowments, though varied, were not superior to those possessed by numbers of others, and a critical judgment would not find it difficult to discover infirmities and

imperfections. A more intimate acquaintance with certain forms of literature, a closer fellowship with some of the great minds of the centuries, would have materially assisted in the evolution of gifts which had not been fully cultivated, and given him an influence and a standing comparable with those of any of his predecessors or contemporaries. His character was not wholly symmetrical; there was an absence of that harmony of the masculine and feminine virtues which fascinate and win. His nature was the soil wherein were produced the hardier fruits of life—moral strength, courage, endurance, persistence, and self-reliance—whilst some other kinds found little or no room, or remained uncultivated. His life and work, however, bore abundant fruit, and fruit which will remain. He toiled as few others have done, both in the pulpit and out of it, and in some years his achievements equalled those of two ordinary men. When elected President in 1897 a writer in the *Magazine* described him as “a good preacher and platform orator, one of the keenest business men in the ministry—if not the keenest—thoroughly acquainted with our rules and regulations, progressive in ideas and spirit, as genial as sunshine, as firm as a rock, as strong and daring as a lion, and as inventive as a Philadelphia lawyer.”

As preacher, platform speaker, pastor, and office-bearer he did yeoman service for his church, and few have had its highest interests more at heart. In his life he incarnated some of those principles which ensure success, and win for their possessor the respect of the intelligent and the wise. He stood in the front rank for a quarter of a century,

and whether he spoke at Conference, or represented his church on special occasions, his words were weighty with sound judgment, and commanded the respect they deserved.

Signs of the rapidly-passing years, of the incessant wear and tear of life, were visible at the Conference of 1905, but no one then imagined that his remaining days would be so few. Ill-health compelled him to go to Cornwall at the end of the year, and here he remained for some time recuperating. Returning to his circuit at the beginning of 1906, he was hopeful of achieving some necessary work, but it was evident that his task was done. On Sunday, March 4th, he received the summons, "Well done: enter into rest." He lived the "strenuous life"—lived it to the full—and few men of my acquaintance have more worthily served the highest interests of the denomination than Alexander Trengove.

Mr. W. TUCKER (Week St. Mary Circuit).

BORN at Tremear, St. Cleather, North Cornwall, on February 4th, 1830, William Tucker is one of the best known men in the Week St. Mary and adjoining circuits. Of Methodist origin—his father a Wesleyan and his mother a Bible Christian—he has demonstrated in manifold ways the moral and spiritual value of Christian service, even when such service is limited by geographical and other barriers. He was only eighteen when the Light of Life dawned upon his

soul, and from the hour it was first recognised and enjoyed it has not ceased to be a part of his Christian experience.

Possessing an active spirit, restless in its passion to minister to the spiritual needs of others, early



he commenced to be a "worker together with God," finding his first sphere of operations in the Sunday school. In this department he has exhibited the keenest interest during a period of fifty-seven years, first as teacher, and then as superintendent. From the publishers of the

"Sunday Companion" he has received the "long service medal"—a symbol of service which he prizes much.

As a local preacher he has done yeoman service. For over fifty years he has been a messenger of the Highest to the inhabitants of the Week St. Mary Circuit, and it is no exaggeration to say he has travelled many thousands of miles to perform this duty. Talking is no burden to "Farmer Tucker," and it is as easy for him to discourse for an hour as thirty minutes. He always is ready, and rarely has he been known to falter for a word. He has held the chief circuit offices many times, and few laymen have a wider experience of quarterly meetings and their doings. Some time since, as an indication of respect and appreciation, the circuit presented him with a handsome clock.

For many years he has been a guardian of the poor, and a district councillor. He takes a deep interest in the temperance question in all its bearings. Few men in the Week St. Mary Circuit are more attached to the denomination, and few, if any, have a better acquaintance with the varied phases of its work. Large-hearted and hospitable, and evincing that robust spirit of piety which touches into music the piety of others, "Farmer Tucker" during more than half-a-century has lived a vigorous and fruitful, a healthy and a happy life, and has demonstrated to the full the compatibility of enjoying the benedictions which spring from natural relationships, and those which have their origin and source in other worlds than this. As far as one's limited knowledge permits of judgment, the subject of this sketch has enjoyed the

life God has given him, and great joy has been his because he has sought to bring light, life, and joy into the lives of others.

Rev. GEORGE DANIEL.

THE subject of this sketch was born about sixty-six years ago, in the parish of Milton Damerel, a parish associated with Bible Christian Methodism by many historic incidents and experiences. Many an inspiring story it could relate, were there a biographer sufficiently interested and sympathetic to listen. In the fields of this parish many a struggle after light and liberty has been experienced, and many a spiritual triumph won. It was here, in the year 1857, that the ineffable joy of the soul's awakening was realised by George Daniel, who from that blissful hour has made endeavours after the Christian life, and succeeded. The godliness and devotion of a Sunday school teacher were potent influences in his character, and these were supplemented by the consecrated activities of a local preacher, who had the joy of leading young Daniel into fellowship with Christ.

Six months after the great decision he set forth to make known to others the joy of the Lord, and as a local preacher he rendered four years of appreciated service. In 1862 the call to a wider sphere was heard and responded to, and at the expiration of the usual probationary term he was received into full Connexion at the Portsmouth Conference of

1866. The first eight years of his ministerial life were spent on circuits demanding no inconsiderable amount of muscle and physical stamina, the journeys by day and by night covering many miles



of lanes, hills, and valleys, and causing exposure to all the winds of heaven. As second preacher he travelled in the Weare, Barnstaple, Callington, and Liskeard Circuits—magnificent training ground, affording ample scope for that physical exercise so

necessary to the maintenance of health and good spirits, and providing scenery of such varied character as to develop the æsthetic taste, and give stimulus to the reflective and cognitive faculties. The next twenty-eight years of his life were spent as pastor of the Kingsbrompton, St. Austell, Camel-ford, Week St. Mary, Hatherleigh, St. Columb, and Crewkerne Circuits. It will be seen that, of the forty-three years of his ministerial career, not less than thirty-six were devoted to the interests of some of our largest country circuits. This is significant of much—it spells laborious days, long journeys, services innumerable, and an intimate, familiar acquaintance with the thousand and one details of country work. The “night scenes of the Bible”—the visions created in the darkness of the hour between ten and eleven o’clock—are not altogether unknown to those brethren whose home from the little Bethel on the hill is seven or eight miles distant. Not infrequently, after a long night journey, has the sentiment sprung spontaneously to the lips, “Be it ever so humble, there’s no place like home.”

The last period of his ministerial service was devoted to the interests of the Bookroom. But what a contrast in atmosphere, area, nature of work, and general environment! From the vision of green fields, blue skies, and glittering stars, to the stuffy atmosphere and cramped rooms of Paternoster Row! “Cribbed, cabined, confined,” it is not easy to discover a greater contrast of experience. Extremes in personal service sometimes create a revulsion of noblest feeling, but it was not so in the case of George Daniel. The

same patient care, attention to details, and high consecration exhibited in the larger, wider sphere of circuit work, were manifested in the discharge of his duties at the Bookroom. He completed his seven years' service in this position at the last Conference (1905), when he was placed on the list of superannuated preachers, after a ministry covering forty-three years.

Mr. Daniel has done a fair share of hard work for the Connexion, having raised many hundreds of pounds for the reduction of liabilities on trust estates, and for the building of new structures. Had ambition for high places been one of his infirmities, he might have filled some official positions, but he has been content to labour quietly within his own limited sphere, and to make the "common task" a consecrated act, leading to the winning of the favour of God, and the peace of an untroubled conscience. His services to the Connexion were recognised by his brethren at the Exeter Conference, when the following resolution was passed :

"That in recommending the Conference to superannuate Rev. George Daniel, we wish to assure our dear brother of our great regard for his personal character and worth, and to express our high appreciation of his faithful, diligent, devoted, and successful work as a minister of the Gospel among us, and also of the valued service which he has rendered the denomination during his seven years as Book Steward. We trust he may yet be able to serve the church of Christ for many years, and we pray that the Master's presence may be ever his strength and joy." Although placed upon the superannuated list, he is still in active service.

Mr. GEORGE MANSER (Faversham).

THE subject of this sketch is a "miracle of grace." Born at Halstow, in the Chatham Circuit, he was one of a family of ten.

When a lad his evil instincts were given free play, and as a result they led him into all kinds of mischief. Foul language flowed from his lips as if for him it possessed some charm or magnetic quality. A terror to all boys and girls, and even to respectable women of the village and neighbourhood, he seemed to have taken a peculiar delight in letting loose his baser nature, and giving it absolute freedom to encroach upon the purity, peace, and integrity of others. He was such a desperate character that even the person who loved him best could scarcely forbear saying—"George, I shall follow you to the gallows, if I do not soon follow you to the grave." A lad must be of the worst moral type to elicit from a mother such a confession as this. His father used to chastise and flog him, but this appears to have made him only more desperate in his determination to follow his own course, utterly heedless of the consequences. His reputation was evil, and evil only.

It was simply impossible, however, for the lad to pursue such a course for long. Nature would not permit it—the laws by which she gives life and perpetuates it could not be so flagrantly abused without terrible consequences. To do evil, and evil only, continually is to enter upon a war against all the righteous forces of the universe, and in such a conflict one issue only is possible. "The end

therefore is death." Evil is a process of life which must terminate in exhaustion or moral extinction. But there is a hopeful aspect presented even by evil in relation to the evil-doer. When by the process of exhaustion it reaches its farthest limit—for even evil has its limitations—when it has



proceeded so far on its wayward course that it is almost impossible to continue another step, then comes a possible crisis. The soul conditions created by experience induce reflection, there arises within the man the angel of a better, nobler life, and not infrequently the determination is affirmed

—"I will arise." The extremities of life are, in the Providence of Heaven, the turning points in many life-histories. The better soul then awakens, takes advantage of the weakness of evil to assert her authority and claim, and points the way that leads to the summit of moral restoration and peace. It was the case with young George Manser.

When sixteen years of age, after he had spent his substance in riotous living, the silent but slow process of restoration commenced. A sad event in his family deeply impressed him, and he decided to purify his lips. The Spirit that broods over all men was finding an entrance into his life, heaven and hell became to him terribly real, and the woes and threatenings of the Bible to evil-doers made him uneasy. His brother one day met him in the lane, spoke gently to him of his conduct, and asked him to become a Christian. Persuaded to go and hear Billy Bailey one night at Hartlip, he went ; but bitterness and distress of soul were his only reward. They were, however, the incipient stages of the soul to sweetness, ecstacy, and spiritual joy. Said young Manser, after hearing Billy preach, "I would give all the money I possess to have that experience." Before he reached his home the crisis had come, the great decision was made, and George Manser became a "new creation in Christ Jesus." The neighbourhood rejoiced in the change, and even the fields and hedges, which for years had resounded with his blasphemies and curses, shared in the thanksgiving.

Remaining at Halstow thirteen years after his conversion, he threw his energies into Sunday school work. Later he came to Davington, near

Faversham. Here, after eighteen months, he lost his wife, and became strangely affected. He fell into a state of melancholia, and contemplated self-destruction. The thought was irresistible that he was doomed to be lost, and so distressing was his experience that he concluded it was impossible for him to be saved. In his agony of soul he cried like Another, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Time, however, fulfilled her mission of healing, and his normal experience returned. The little cause at Teynham was then in a bad state, almost dead. Manser was appealed to by the circuit minister (Rev. M. Brokenshire) to see what he could do to revive it. His second visit resulted in one conversion, a school was re-commenced, which in a few weeks doubled its former numbers. For some time conversions were witnessed nearly every week : but there were "dark seasons" experienced in connection with the work. Thoughts of surrender gripped him again and again. The work was exacting, and it was suggested to him that he was not acting justly towards himself to work laboriously day by day in a brickfield from early morning till half-past five or six o'clock, walk about three miles to the chapel, take the entire responsibility for the service night after night, and return home between ten and eleven o'clock. There was reason in the suggestion, but life and conduct are not governed by reason alone. There are other and more potent factors, and these were the driving forces in Manser's heroic service for Christ. Six persons were converted on the night he was tempted to give up the work, and a movement was commenced among the children. His

zeal and heroism were apostolic, and his passion for souls was so intense and strong, that more than once he felt that "he would willingly have died if only souls might be saved."

Salvation, hell, heaven, and the Devil are very real things, and not shadows, to George Manser. They are not merely symbolic names, but facts, realities, objective existences—to him the most real things in the universe of God. One Sunday night, at Teynham, he was blackening the Devil's character, when the Accused appeared upon the scene, and threatened him. "I will meet you at the cross-paths in the wood on your way home to-night, Manser, if you don't stop abusing me to this congregation," said the Tempter. Nothing daunted, Manser replied, "I shall say what I've got to say about you before I sit down, and then you can do your worst." The service over, Manser started for home between nine and ten o'clock. There were two roads by which he could travel, but he had accustomed himself to the road through the wood, being the shortest route. On reaching the entrance to the wood the question arose in his mind, "Shall I go to meet him, or not?" He experienced mixed emotions, and felt not a little curious. Determined, however, to play the man, and to act out his faith in the Power and Providence of God, he resolved to risk the consequences, and go through the wood. Space forbids a description of his experience as he walked through the wood, and reached the exact spot where the Devil promised to meet him, that night. A man of tremendous strength, with hands almost as hard as iron, before he reached the spot he summoned all

his forces of will and body, and prepared himself for the Foe. The place of promised meeting, however, was as peaceful and calm as if the Angels of Heaven had hushed the wind into perfect stillness, and nothing was visible but what belonged to Nature, and lived within her domain. "The Lord again hath conquered," ejaculated Manser, "and victory is on Israel's side." But the memory of that night will not be obliterated this side of the grave.

Some few years after his conversion he signed the pledge. At that time it was thought impossible to perform the work of a brickmaker without strong drink. A man was thought a fool who would attempt it; but for nearly half-a-century George Manser has proved that not only is it unnecessary, but is absolutely injurious to the man who would perform the best work. Possessing great strength of body, he has been able to perform tasks demanding the exercise of muscle without the use of alcohol. He is essentially a strong man in more than one sense. Religiously, he is a giant, strong with the strength that issues from invisible sources. To some his presence is a veritable benediction, and more than one person has informed the writer that the grip of his hard, brawny hand has produced a thrill of delight. Unknown to fame—never seen at District Meetings or Annual Conferences, with an outlook limited probably to his own immediate circle or the country in which he lives—he is, nevertheless, a man of power, and one of those who, in our churches, amid their numerical fluctuations, seek to maintain their spiritual tone, and keep them from degenerating

into merely benevolent societies. "The righteous shall hold on his way." To sit for an hour at his feet, and to listen to him repeating the stories of the triumphs of grace in "the olden times," is an experience for which the best might be thankful. So strong is his passion to save men, that he has been heard to say, with tears in his voice and eyes, that if by dying God would save the people, he would willingly surrender his life. Is he not a direct successor of St. Paul, who would willingly have been "accursed for Israel's sake?"

Rev. JAMES BENDLE.



LEAVE Farm House, Burrington, Devon, where the Bendle family had lived for many generations, was the birth-place, on the 27th of February, 1836, of the subject of this sketch. The family was one of the oldest in the parish, and its history can be traced back many centuries. Blessed with pious parents, and the whole atmosphere of the home permeated with the religious spirit, it is no cause for wonder that young Bendle early in life became the subject of deep spiritual impressions. Being somewhat timid and reserved, he hesitated to declare his convictions, and it was not until January, 1855, when about nineteen years of age, that he proclaimed his decision to become a Christian. About eighteen months after his conversion he commenced Christian work, and was successful in winning numbers to Christ. Convinced that he ought to exercise

his gifts in a wider sphere, he was accepted as a candidate for the ministry in 1861, and at the following Conference was received on probation. He was ordained at the Portsmouth Conference



in 1866. The following list of circuits indicates that he has laboured in some of the widest spheres in the Connexion spheres which have demanded no inconsiderable amount of physical strength, watchfulness, and attention to detail :—Tiverton,

Crewkerne, Dalwood, Tiverton and Bampton, Kingsbridge, Bodmin, St. Columb, Week St. Mary, Kilkhampton, Tiverton (third time), Ringsash, Blaenavon, Crewkerne (second time), and Southmolton. At the last-named circuit he remained one year, after which he was superannuated; but he still continues to preach, and experiences keen delight in conducting evangelistic missions and addressing temperance gatherings.

During his ministry Mr. Bendle has been the recipient of many expressions of approbation. He has directed much of his time and energy to the material side of religious service, and it is not exaggerating to ascribe to him the credit of raising thousands of pounds for new chapels and reduction of debts on others. This side of his work was recognised at Tiverton, where he was presented with an illuminated address and a silver ink-stand. The address expresses unqualified "appreciation of the valuable and energetic services rendered by him in raising nearly £1,700 towards building and renovating various chapels in the town and neighbourhood." He has excelled in renovating and building new churches, and not a few of the most important buildings in the circuits in which he has laboured are the result of his untiring energy and industry. Frequently he has drawn the plans, written the specifications, superintended the erection, and secured no insignificant part of the cost.

From the above statements it will be seen that Mr. Bendle has not lived the life of ease. He has filled a most important niche, and filled it well. To toilers such as he the denomination owes a debt, for without such brethren, who render un-

stinted service in erecting and beautifying our village churches, eloquent preachers would have less scope for the exercise of their gifts. We are disposed to classify ministers as we classify other mammalia, but we have yet to wait for the Divine classification, and to see the estimate which the Eternal sets upon the various kinds of service rendered in His name and for His glory.

In the year 1869 Mr. Bendle married Miss Helen Sanderecock, but in the following year she was cut off by consumption. Two years later he took as his second wife Miss F. C. Batten. Both parents are naturally proud of their son, James H. Bendle, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., M.B. Although living far from the nearest Bible Christian Chapel, the son is walking in the way of righteousness, and is deeply attached to the church of his fathers.

Mr. WILLIAM SAXON (Plymouth).

THE biographical facts relating to Mr. Saxon can soon be told. He was born at Newton St. Cyres, April 9th, 1841. There he spent his childhood and early youth. From thence he removed to Quethiock, on the western side of the Tamar, and became apprenticed to a miller. He was already the subject of deep religious convictions, and under the ministry of Rev. P. Labdon, he was led to the personal acceptance of Christ as his Saviour and Lord. The place and the time were never forgotten, January 17th, 1861, being one of the great

memorial days of his life. He came to Plymouth in 1867 —there his life-work was done, and there he will be chiefly remembered, though he was well known and much beloved in a very wide circle. At Plymouth, on August 26th, he “fell



asleep,” and there his body rests till “the trump shall sound.”

And what shall be said of him, to perpetuate his memory and to honour his Master? This, first and before all, he was a Christian, a lover and a follower of Jesus Christ. His Christianity

was not simply a creed, or a confession of faith, but personal devotion to a personal Saviour. One saw it in his face, so bright, so radiant. Never do I remember a frown or a shade of ill-temper beclouding it. That brightness was due, not only to a naturally sanguine and optimistic temperament, but to "the grace of God which was in him." His was the religion of the shining face. He had sufficient grace to save him from discontent and covetousness, and to make him happy, radiantly happy in Jesus. We heard it in his words. There was the ring of sincerity in his utterances. When he spoke his Christian experience, it was with the accent of certainty. He "knew whom he had believed." He was a class-leader for many years, and filled this office at the time of his death. As an elder of the church, trustee of many chapels, circuit steward, chapel steward, Sunday school superintendent, etc., he rendered ungrudging and faithful service.

He was one of the oldest local preachers of the Plymouth circuit, and must have served the Connexion in this capacity for forty years, not only in Plymouth, but in the Devonport, Callington, Tavistock, and other circuits. His preaching gifts were not great, but in simplicity and sincerity he served his Master as a witness of the saving truth of the Gospel. He never knowingly neglected an appointment. His fidelity was strongly marked. Where you found him one day you would find him the next, only that he would be a few steps further on in the same road. We saw his Christianity in his life. Radiant of face and sincere of speech, his religion found its best and most practical

embodiment in his life. His religion was ethical as well as evangelical. Its roots struck downward, and it bore fruit upward. His life bore the hall-mark, the Divine seal of purity. His business relations were distinguished by integrity and uprightness.

He possessed a most catholic and generous spirit. He sought opportunities of doing good—sympathy, helpfulness, kindness to those that were in need. These qualities conspicuously adorned his character. Many whom he helped in the time of need will miss him. He did good by stealth, and would blush to find it fame. His memory will remain in our hearts as that of a good man, who sought to do good to all men whom the sphere of his life embraced. And it is in things like these that character finds its true worth and esteem, and the final sentences of judgment will depend.

This tribute would not be complete without a reference to Mr. Saxon as a true and loyal Bible Christian. While he possessed sufficient catholicity to regard with interest all the churches of Jesus Christ, he unquestionably cherished a deep and absorbing love for his own church. Through its instrumentality he had found "the Pearl of Great Price." Within its communion he found friendships and fellowships that became dearer than life itself, and through many long years he served its interests with the utmost faithfulness, cheerfulness, and zeal. As he was prospered of God, so he gave liberally to the funds of the church, and counted it a privilege to do so. He especially rejoiced in the extension of the Bible

Christian Denomination in Plymouth and the surrounding district, and his name will be found engraved on more than one memorial stone.

He knew and shared in the early struggles and privations of the church, and by his cheery optimism and steadfast devotion often helped to make the crooked things straight and the rough places plain. Around the church of Zion Street his earliest and his latest experiences gathered. Zion Street was his spiritual home. During his last illness his thoughts turned there. He bore testimony to the preciousness of Christ, and sent this message —“Tell all the friends at Zion Street to meet me in heaven.” He has now entered the heavenly Zion, the city of the living God, and his emancipated spirit has joined “the spirits of just men made perfect.”—(A. H.)

Rev. THOMAS BRAUND.

(President of Conference, 1899).

MR. Braund was born December 11th, 1842, at Milton Mill, in the Shebbear Circuit, in the house, or next door to the house (which cannot now be ascertained) where Mr. O'Bryan won his first convert in North Devon. He was converted when ten years old, in revival services conducted by Rev. C. Dening, and began to preach at fifteen. Mr. B. Hopper and he having appointments together on the circuit plan. When twenty years of age he

was accepted as a candidate for the ministry. For the first six months he laboured in the Shebbear Circuit, under the direction of the Rev. W. Hopper.



one of the most heavenly-minded men Mr. Braund ever knew. They were favoured with extensive revivals at Sutcombe, Sheepwash, Frithelstock, and Bradford.

In the spring of 1863 he spent four months at Portland, supplying the place of a preacher whose health had failed. At the Conference of 1863 he was sent to the Gwennap Circuit, but just before Christmas he was laid aside with sciatica, the result, it was thought, of getting wet through and preaching in wet clothes. For several months he was unable to walk, but on his recovery he was sent to supply a vacancy at Bideford, where he laboured as the colleague of the Rev. W. Mountjoy until the Conference of 1866. His association with Mr. and Mrs. Mountjoy and others, and his participation in the wonderful revival at Buckland Brewer, where about eighty persons professed conversion, he has always regarded as among the happiest experiences of his life. From Bideford he went to the Hicks Mill Circuit, where he spent three happy years with the Rev. J. D. Balkwill. Conversions here were frequent at the ordinary services. In 1869 he was sent to Tavistock, where he laboured for three years, having the Revs. J. Seldon and R. Vaughan as superintendents. At Chillaton, in this circuit, he had the joy of witnessing a glorious revival, many professing conversion.

In 1872 he accepted an invitation to labour in the Shebbear Circuit—his native place. Two years after he accepted the superintendency, with the Rev. W. Brock as his colleague. But in the early part of 1876 there was a sudden breakdown in health, caused, it was thought, through excessive labour. For some weeks there was frequent hemorrhage, and it was feared the result would prove serious. Few expected recovery, but after

a long period of comparative rest his health began to improve, though for two or three years he suffered great weakness, and it was with difficulty he was able to engage in public work. In 1879 superannuation was deemed necessary. Since then he has often suffered the entire loss of voice for three, four, and even six consecutive months : but, on recovery, he has seldom failed to preach once a Sunday, and has often been able to render assistance during the week.

Notwithstanding his withdrawal from the list of active ministers, Mr. Braund has by no means withdrawn from active service. In his own sphere, and in manifold ways, he has rendered, and still continues to render, very helpful, appreciative service. For many years, during his retirement in the Shebbear Circuit, he exhibited an active interest in the circulation of a library of about eight hundred volumes, distributed between from fifteen to eighteen villages, the volumes being changed in sets from village to village. By the adoption of this method of service many families in the Shebbear and surrounding circuits had the privilege of reading books which otherwise they would never had seen.

Mr. Braund is a regular attendant at the Annual Conference, and in a quiet way renders most effective service. The part he took in connection with the New Century Movement is known to all. To him the Connexion owes a debt of gratitude for his service in this successful campaign. In 1896, at the Shebbear District Meeting, he moved a resolution, requesting the Conference to prescribe a course of study in Holy Scripture and Christian

doctrine for young people and young local preachers. At the following Conference the scheme recommended by the Examining Committee was adopted, and Mr. Braund, for the obligatory course, was appointed secretary. In this capacity he is rendering excellent service to the young men and the denomination. Mr. Braund has also taken a deep interest in the Local Preachers' Benevolent Association, and counts it an honour to have the power to reveal his sympathy to these servants of the Lord in the days of darkness and distress. The brightness and joy the gifts from this fund bring to its recipients are known only to those immediately concerned. In 1899 Mr. Braund was elected President of Conference.

If space permitted, it would be easy to paint a picture in which would be revealed the manifold gifts and graces of Thomas Braund. He owes much to the denomination, but it is more than balanced by what the denomination owes to him. It is difficult, if not impossible, to estimate correctly the influence of men. There are so many factors, such manifold and complex conditions, and such intertwinings, that the task of estimating any man's direct and indirect influence is perplexing. Mr. Braund's influence for good has been exerted in various ways, not the least important being the manner in which he has affected the religious life and service and destiny of young men, some of whom are distinguishing themselves in the ministry. Quietly, and without ostentation, he has guided many a young man into the way of righteousness, and his interest in their welfare shows no sign of diminution. When Mr. Braund, in 1899, at Hols-

worthy, received from his brethren the greatest honour they could confer, a brother exclaimed—"He is worthy." What I then wrote may be repeated here: "Though not in active ministerial work, his service to the denomination in the Shebbear Circuit and district is rich in spiritual results. Many young men owe their spiritual relation to Christ, and some their position in the ministry, to the wise advice of Thomas Braund. Affectionate, tender, and sympathetic, with a persuasive power not given to all men, he is a brother well-beloved by all who know him. Some compliments are not worth the having, but there is one which I heard paid to Mr. Braund in his absence which the greatest among us might legitimately covet. Speaking some time since of ministers, a person said in my hearing that if he had to choose one minister as a life-long pastor, his choice would fall on Thomas Braund."

A few months since Mr. Braund removed from the Shebbear Circuit to Holsworthy. In the *Shebbear Circuit Messenger* at the time appeared a brief eulogy from the pen of Mr. Ruddle, and I cannot do better, in concluding this sketch, than reproduce it here. "The removal of the Rev. Thomas Braund from the Shebbear Circuit," says Mr. Ruddle, "suggests the review of a singularly noble and useful life. It is a cause of rejoicing to us all that at Holsworthy he will be in almost as close contact with several of our societies as at Sutcombe, and that if his life and health are spared, we may look forward to seeing him as often, or nearly as often, in the future as in the past. It will be no exaggeration to say

that since the removal of James Thorne no minister has won such wide-spread influence and affection in the Shebbear Circuit and the adjacent societies, and that never was a position more honestly won. Quiet, unostentatious, unselfish labour has been his deliberate choice, and he has pursued it with untiring zeal and perseverance. An evangelist in the very best sense of the term, he has always been a power making for righteousness. In a very emphatic way he has been the friend of the poor and needy—eyes to the blind, and feet unto the lame. In politics, as in religion, he has been on the side of peace, temperance, political freedom, and religious equality: and though we may not at all times have quite agreed with his findings, we have respected his integrity of purpose and his clearness of moral vision, and have been led to re-consider our own position from the very fact that such a man disagreed with our opinions. It will be the earnest prayer of all who have the best interests of truth and religion at heart that his life may be long spared to proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, the fruits of which have been so manifest in his own life.”

Rev. JOHN HERRIDGE BATT.

(President of Conference, 1887).

THE lack of biographical data is one reason of the absence from this sketch of some interesting features incorporated in others, and what these are may justly be left to the imagination. But it is safe to affirm that few

men in the ministry of the Bible Christian Connexion have been more highly favoured than Mr. Batt. The necessities of existence made no such demand from him in early life as from the majority of his brethren, nearly all of whom were under obligation to toil by sweat of brow to obtain a livelihood. Favoured with facilities for mental culture, Mr. Batt entered the ministry in 1864, and has travelled in such circuits as Hicks Mill, Torrington, Newport (I. of W.), Portsmouth, Forest Hill, Tavistock (Rock), &c.

His endowments marked him from the first as one who would take a foremost place in the ranks of the denomination. His scholarship and acquaintance with theological literature won for him early in his ministry a place on the Examining Committee, and for a long period he acted as its secretary. On this committee he came into close touch with numbers of young men preparing for the ministry, and his sympathy with their aspirations and ideals, and his knowledge of the difficulties which would perpetually confront them, handicapped as they were through lack of preliminary training, afforded him opportunities for direct, personal service of an educational character which few of his brethren have possessed. Not a few young men have reason to be grateful for his sympathy and encouragement.

At the Conference of 1886, held at Brougham Road Church, Portsmouth, Mr. Batt was elected secretary, and in the following year was appointed President. The Conference of 1888 was held at Forest Hill, and as it was a "crisis" in the history of the writer and two other young brethren, impressions were made which will not easily be

erased. The "charge" delivered to the three young brethren made, I remember, a profound impression upon the Conference, but whether the three young men directly concerned, and for whose benefit the message was supposed to be delivered, were equally moved, I will not venture to say. But it was one of Mr. Batt's finest efforts, and it was the general verdict that the "charge" was among the best ever delivered. As a preacher and platform speaker, Mr. Batt is acknowledged as standing in the front rank. His style differs somewhat from that of most of his brethren. Dignity, majesty, and strength are in his utterances, but they lack vivacity and directness. In spoken address and in written speech the construction of the sentence is long and too involved, and is not sufficiently crisp and pungent to capture the ear of the multitude, or to win popular approval. In the ordinary acceptance of the term, therefore, Mr. Batt has never been regarded as a "popular preacher"; but when he has a "good time," and the command of diction is equal to the flow of elevated thought, few men in our ministry can grip and hold and inspire a thoughtful audience better than John Herridge Batt. In this connection it is only necessary to recall the sermon to the Conference at Bideford in 1885, the missionary address at Cardiff, and the speech on Methodist union at the Conference at Exeter. And the writer will not readily forget the address, lasting over an hour, heard at the Local Preachers' Convention at Liskeard. All these were striking and inspiring utterances, and of those privileged to hear them few, I venture to think, will ever

forget their characteristic elements, or the thrill of delight which they created.

Mr. Batt has made considerable use of the pen. In the earlier years of his ministry he was a frequent contributor to the Magazine, the pages of which contained the articles now forming the little book, "The Pattern Prayer Plainly Put." During recent years he has acted as Connexional Editor, and was happy at the outset in the selection for the Magazine of a number of interesting articles by various writers on "Living Friends in Active Circuits." Two short biographies from his pen—"Dwight L. Moody" and "Dr. Barnardo," published by Messrs. Partridge—have had a ready sale, and have been productive of much good. For some years Mr. Batt was joint-editor of a little publication having for its object the cultivation of the higher life—a subject in which he has manifested considerable interest.

Although at present "without pastoral charge," and therefore free from the minutiae which perplex the spirit and impede the development of a circuit minister's mental gifts, Mr. Batt still serves the denomination as Theological Tutor at Shebbear College and Editor of the *Bible Christian Magazine*. Lines have fallen to him in pleasant places, and his has been a goodly heritage. In the peaceful realm of helpful literature he has spent many a long and happy day, and the angels of quiet thought and spiritual meditation have ever been his welcome companions. A voluminous, though by no means a wide reader, religious literature has been his meat and drink, and in the companionship of books he has experienced some of life's chief

delights. Without hesitation, he would say with Wordsworth—

“ Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we know,
Are a substantial world, both pure and good ;
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.”

Mr. & Mrs. F. P. GRANDIN (Jersey).

FOR more than three-quarters of a century now the Bible Christian Church has been established in Jersey. Throughout that lengthened period it has never lacked a succession of noble-minded men and women, who, in seasons of depression no less than in times of great prosperity, have bravely and faithfully stood by its side. Many of them have long since passed into the Silent Land, and of not a few the recollections that abide are exceedingly meagre. Still, if one knew all that might be known, it would be perfectly safe to say that never has the church been more devotedly or self-sacrificingly served than by those of whom this particular sketch treats.

Originally Mr. and Mrs. Frank Grandin were members of other communions. Mr. Grandin's earliest days were spent in the Anglican Church, to which, it may have been, he would have continued to go, but for the solicitations of a friend who persuaded him to visit Great Union Road Chapel. That was a memorable visit. It marked the beginning of a deeper religious experience. A need of something, to which hitherto he had been a

stranger, had been awakened in his heart. Nevertheless, the battle was fought out in secret, and



the "one thing needful" surely and rejoicingly found. From that moment he made a choice of the Bible Christian Church as his spiritual home.

Mrs. Grandin, on the other hand, came of a family who were ardent friends of the French Wesleyan Church. Very naturally, she grew up to share their sympathies, and, what is worthy of note, was received into the fellowship of the Grove Place Chapel within the same year that had witnessed the spiritual crisis of her husband. Her marriage in 1869 led to Mrs. Grandin's withdrawal from the French Wesleyans, to whom she was greatly attached, to unite with her husband at Great Union Road. It was a step that must have involved considerable sacrifice, in that henceforth her public worship would be in another language. But the surrender was made in the same beautiful way in which she was wont to do all things. Thus began a union which has been fraught with unspeakable blessing to a great multitude of people, and especially to the Bible Christian Churches of Jersey.

So quickly did they win the affections of the people, and so whole-hearted and effective was their service, that within a very few years they came to be recognized as the natural leaders of the church. As early as 1874 Mr. Grandin was elected to the office of circuit steward, and it is a tribute to the courtesy, the dignity, and the efficiency with which the duties of the position have been discharged that, with the cheerful and unanimous consent of his brethren, he has continued to hold it ever since. High-minded, of breadth and clearness of vision, prudent and sagacious, his counsel, sought by many people, has been of exceeding value to his own denomination, which he has served on its Connexional Committees,

as well as in his island home. In addition to the cares of a large business and his ever-active interest in religious affairs, he has found time to collect and make a somewhat exhaustive study of a well-nigh unique collection of metrical versions of the Psalms. Month by month there is a Psalmist's page in the local magazine of the Jersey Circuit, contributed by himself, and read, as many an acknowledgment has indicated, with both pleasure and profit. Great is the esteem in which Mr. Grandin is held by all who have the privilege of his acquaintance.

But what shall one say of Mrs. Grandin? She has gone from us to her heavenly reward, but in the hearts of her friends she will long be remembered as a woman of saintly life. In the estimation of one who knew her well, "she had all the points of Christianity": while a Congregational minister has said of her that "she combined all the good qualities of Martha, Mary, and Dorcas." How she led the women of our churches in every good word and work! The great biennial bazaars—notable achievements in the history of the Jersey Circuit—found her incessantly busy, rising early and toiling late, receiving large work parties into her home, planning for them, providing for them, never once thinking of the immense demands upon herself, and, in the meritorious success that invariably followed, giving God the praise. Side by side with all this labour, the sick were visited and the poor remembered. Her coming and going was as that of an angel of light. She was the friend, in that word's highest sense, of all who knew her, while the kindness of her spirit, allied

to a fine judiciousness, made her the confidante of many a troubled heart, and a conciliator frequently in cases of dispute. A rare and precious gift was she to us—one who, far more than will ever be known, made for the peace and prosperity of the church.

One cannot close this sketch without remarking upon the important place which, quite early in their married life, Mr. and Mrs. Grandin gave to the cause of foreign missions. “We were encouraged,” one of the children has publicly stated, “to interest ourselves in missionaries and their work.” That was an encouragement which has been amply rewarded, in that the daughter already referred to is to-day a medical missionary in far Western China. Nor may one omit to say, as a further evidence of this family’s deep missionary spirit, that the entire expense of Dr. Grandin’s training was borne by her father: and in doing this he has made to the Connexion one of the most precious gifts that it has ever received. The name of Grandin, honoured alike in several families, is, and will for long years continue to be, a household word amongst the Bible Christians of the Jersey Circuit.

Rev. MARK BROKENSHIRE.

(President of Conference, 1889).

THE subject of this sketch hails from the village of Roche, Cornwall, where he was born December 3rd, 1840. Early in life he experienced the power of religious

truth, and when seventeen years of age surrendered himself fully to his Lord. Christian service attracted him, and he became a Sunday school teacher. At the age of nineteen he commenced to preach, and when only twenty-one he was appointed class leader.

In 1863 he entered upon a larger service by occupying the position of hired local preacher in the Chichester Circuit, proceeding the year following to Liphook as a probationer for the work of the ministry. Here he was much encouraged in his toil by the kindly sympathy of his superintendent (Rev. Jehu Martin). Giving a literal interpretation to a rule in the Digest, he began to hold, at least once a quarter, temperance meetings instead of the usual preaching service, and at these gatherings he received much blessing. From Liphook he went to Portsmouth, and at the Conference of 1868, held at Shebbear, he was received into full Connexion. Since his reception he has laboured at Sheerness, Faversham—where his ministry made a deep and abiding impression—Redruth, Torquay, Kilburn, Falmouth and Penryn, Chichester, Bristol, Bideford, St. Austell, Newton Abbot, Sittingbourne and Shanklin. A deeply conscientious worker, possessing an intense desire to communicate religious truth, his pulpit ministrations have always been appreciated, and have contributed to the strengthening of faith in those things which possess the element of permanency. In many of his circuits he remained the full period of four years, but during recent years the state of his health prevented him from discharging all the responsibilities associated with

a few of the circuits, and he was under obligation to remove to more congenial spheres before the expiration of the usual term.

Responsible positions in the Connexion have been filled by him with considerable ability, and critical cases in circuits have been wisely settled by his perception and judgment. In 1883 he was appointed Secretary of the Children's Fund, and in 1888 was elected Secretary of Conference. The highest honour came in 1889, when he was appointed President.

In Mr. Brokenshire the critical faculty is largely developed, and when opportunities demanding its exercise have presented themselves, he has not been slow to respond. When stationed in the Faversham Circuit he conducted a lengthy newspaper controversy on temperance, and had the satisfaction of knowing that not only were his opponents discomfited, but some were won to sign the temperance pledge. At Bideford the critical faculty led him into controversy with two Episcopal clergymen on "The State Church and the Free Churches." The controversy took the form of letters in a local newspaper, and these have since been re-published in pamphlet form.

Mr. Brokenshire is one of the few ministers in the denomination who have ventured to publish their sermons in book form. His volume, entitled "The Veiled To-Morrow," contains some of his ripest thoughts. Although the book lacks many of the popular elements essential to great success as a publication, it has been highly spoken of by reviewers, and has had a good sale. The author has also been honoured by being invited to con-

tribute two or three sermons to the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*. To various newspapers he has contributed many columns, cherishing the conviction that through the Press, as well as from the pulpit, he could exercise a beneficent influence, and assist in elevating the moral tone and conscience of the people. Whilst recognising the supreme claims of his circuit, he has not limited his influence to it, but has gone forth to participate in the wider intellectual life of local institutions. In the composition and delivery of lectures on scientific and other subjects he has experienced great delight, and not a few have been the expressions of appreciation from those who have heard them.

That Mr. Brokenshire, during his ministry, has done some hard, solid work is only what might have been expected from such a conscientious minister. The exigencies of circuit work demanded it, especially in some circuits, where the members were few, and the financial resources exceedingly limited. In ordinary circuit work success has been achieved, whilst at Torquay, Redruth, Kilburn, Bristol, St. Austell, and other circuits "specials" have contributed to the reduction of debts, and the lessening of the burden of ministerial maintenance.

Had Mr. Brokenshire been favoured with a university training, he might have succeeded as a professor of philosophy. He possesses a philosophical and critical mind, which loves to wrestle with thought that lies beyond the common plane. He is prone to metaphysics, and the tendency reveals itself in his sermons. The style and substance of

his discourses are away from the popular taste—the spirit of the metaphysician permeates them—and only a few have any passionate love for thought and speech which make demands upon the thought-forces of the mind. Mr. Brokenshire has been a careful, though not a wide reader. A passion for reading and memorising was early developed, and when at school he could recite with ease what other boys were necessitated to read. The advantages of a liberal education were denied him, but every opportunity for self-improvement he has assiduously cultivated. Ere manhood was reached he used to spend six or seven hours a day with his books. When stationed in London, such was his passion for knowledge, that he embraced the opportunity of attending the Apologetic and Greek Testament Classes at New College, under the direction of Professors Newth and Redford—a step which contributed largely to his intellectual attainments.

At the Conference of 1902 failing health compelled his retirement. Reluctantly he withdrew from the “full work of the ministry,” but he still continues to labour, much to his own comfort, and the joy of those whom he seeks to serve.

Mr. THOMAS JOHNS (Polperro).

THE little village of Polperro, on the south coast of the Delectable Duchy, is universally acknowledged to be one of the most charmingly-picturesque spots in

England. To artists it is a paradise, affording them that delectation of spirit created by the vision of rugged grandeur and natural beauty, unspoiled by modern innovations. Here in this quiet village lived for many years Mr. Thomas



Johns, one of the most highly respected men in the neighbourhood. For a lengthened period he was the leading spirit of the little society accustomed to meet at Ebenezer Chapel, a building

standing close to the road, and protected on three sides by rocks reaching to a considerable height. He was the oldest member of the little society, having been associated with it about fifty five years. During this period he rendered it ungrudging service, both of a personal and financial character. He filled all the official positions, having been society steward, trustee steward, and superintendent of the school. None was more regular than he at the Sunday and week-evening services. In sunshine and storm, he was ever faithful to the church in which he had received his greatest blessings, and dearer to him than material wealth was its spiritual prosperity. He divided his affections between his home and the little society on the opposite side of the road, and how much this signified the records invisible to human vision alone can disclose. In his wife and daughter his spiritual instincts found a welcome response, and to them he owed much for that spirituality of mind, religious devotion, and close attachment to the church of God which for a number of years characterised his life. Mrs. Johns is one of the saints of the earth—the soul of Christian kindness and sympathy, and one who is ever willing to bestow upon others a share of the benedictions she herself enjoys. The daughter is following in the footsteps of her parents.

On October 2nd, 1904, after a brief illness, the spirit of Mr. Johns passed into that Silent Land where the noise of battle is never heard, and where the shadows of sin and suffering never gather. Joyful to himself as was his departure, it was otherwise with those who knew him, and who

were more or less associated with him. When the unexpected news spread that he had passed away, a gloom was cast over the whole village. Some were unaware of his illness. He attended the services on the previous Sabbath, and performed his usual duties; but a few days later there were ominous signs, and about half-past eight on the following Sunday morning he passed peacefully into rest. One who knew him intimately says that "for fifteen years he had known him as a man of strict integrity, sound judgment, and deep piety." Although not without defects, lacking in some measure breadth and fineness of sympathy, he possessed an upright, sturdy, and sterling moral character. The beliefs cherished in his younger days were retained to the last, and they kept him true to his manhood, true to the church in which he received his highest good, and true to the Christ whom he loved.

Rev. JOHN OSBORNE KEEN, D.D.

(President of Conference, 1888).

THE little, obscure village of Pencarrow, near Wadebridge, is the Nazareth from which has emerged into popularity and fame the most rhetorical preacher known to Bible Christian Methodism. Born in this isolated spot in Cornwall on August 26th, 1846, John Osborne Keen is approaching the close of his threescore years. Early in life he turned his feet towards the hills, and from the time he was

fourteen years of age he has never ceased to climb. Within twelve months after receiving the light of Divine truth he was sent forth to diffuse it to others, and this beneficent mission he has continued with success to this day.



On his parents removing to Bodmin, young Keen attended the Wesleyan Day School, and here he made such rapid progress, that at the early age of twelve the master considered him qualified for the duties of a "monitor" and wished to have him

apprenticed, with a view to a course of training for school work at Westminster. But it was otherwise ordered. At fourteen the boy was placed with a Bodmin draper, a good, pious Wesleyan Methodist, and an influential member of the church, whose upright example in business greatly impressed him. On Sundays he attended the Bible Christian School and Chapel, his parents being members. Less than a year after his conversion he discovered a talent for preaching. The lad was encouraged to exercise it, and the fame of the "Boy Preacher" drew crowds wherever he went. It was no mere precocious flash-in-the-pan. Those who were able to form an opinion saw that the lad had many natural gifts, united to great stability of character and deep earnestness, and felt that he had found his true vocation. For three or four years he devoted himself diligently to business and study, and preached often on Sundays and week evenings with no loss of acceptability, and with increasing success.

Eventually the circuit officials and other friends persuaded him to offer himself for the itinerant ministry, and having passed the usual examinations, he was accepted by the Exeter Conference in 1865. Holsworthy was his first circuit. Thence he was transferred to Exeter, and in the capital of the county, with its scores of churches and chapels, many of the pulpits of which were at that time filled by men of high reputation, the young preacher not only held his own, but made himself felt as a power for good beyond the range of his own denomination. Providence Chapel, with its amphitheatre-like arrangement of seats, giving every

occupant of the building a clear view of the rostrum, was filled to the doors whenever Mr. Keen was to preach, and his services as a lecturer and platform speaker were in much request. His ministry in the "ever faithful city" is still remembered with pleasure. From Exeter he was transferred to the Isle of Wight, and thence to Penzance. Other circuits which have claimed his ministry are Chatham, Swansea, Torrington, Forest Hill, Cardiff, Jersey, Devonport, and Kilburn.

The admission is general that, as a preacher and platform speaker, Dr. Keen is one who stands in the front rank. Though one would hesitate to assert that he is what is known as a "born preacher," to his infinite credit it must be said that he has risen to his present position of influence through sheer diligence and devotion, and the cultivation and exercise of gifts which are more widely distributed than some teachers of the doctrine of heredity would have one believe. The infinite capacity for taking pains in order to produce the best work has characterised the whole of Dr. Keen's life-work as preacher and lecturer. Internal evidence in his pulpit productions discloses the care and precision which he puts into his work. Every paragraph, yea, every sentence is carefully considered before receiving its final form. During the whole of his ministry he has been devoted to his pen, and it is questionable whether, in this respect, any other minister in the Connexion approaches him. If one is permitted to offer a criticism, it is safe to say that a too strict devotion to the pen robs one of the spontaneity and abandon which prove sometimes so effective when certain

psychological conditions in an audience prevail. Writing in the *Christian Age* in 1883, a contributor described Dr. Keen as "the Apollos of the Connexion, possessing a pleasant voice, a good flow of language, and a clear and rapid utterance."

Nature seemed niggardly when she made the frame for his spirit's dwelling—or was it that, acting on the principle of concealment, she determined to demonstrate that, within the limited confines of a small physical frame, there might be stored the passions and powers of a well-knit soul? However interpreted, the fact remains that Dr. Keen is little of stature, but of considerable intellectual and emotional power. Popular in his probationary days, he has maintained his reputation to the present as being one of the most eloquent preachers the denomination possesses. He has not been unmindful of the value of the dictionary, with the result that in sermon and speech his vocabulary is far beyond the average. Careful in his preparation for the pulpit, he has ever made preaching and lecturing the supreme tasks of his life, and throughout the Connexion no preacher has been more popular with audiences than he. He has a style of his own—rhetorical, imaginative, descriptive. Aerial flights, as if on eagle wings, have ever had a peculiar fascination for him, and many an attentive listener to his rhetoric has been winged in thought above the dust and beyond the clouds, into the calm serenity of the upper and silent spheres. By the vigour of his delivery, and the passion which he displays in his proclamations of Divine truth, he arouses the keenest interest in his audience, and not infrequently are they carried

to the uplands, beyond the common and the sordid. The seal of the Divine approval has been set upon his work, and he cherishes the "witness within."

In 1888 Dr. Keen was elected President of Conference, and the following year delivered a memorable charge to the young men received into full Connexion. He has been a prolific writer, as, in addition to sermons and articles to the *Bible Christian Magazine*, he has written "Suggestive Thoughts for Busy Workers," "On the King's Business," "Parson Jacques His Chips and Chats," "Tom Sharman," "Twilight Whispers," "The Emphasis of Belief," &c. He is as facile with pen as with speech, and his literary output exceeds that of most of his ministerial brethren. Crystallising thought in forms of speech and written word seems to possess for him a peculiar fascination and charm. Now and again the thought assumes rhythmical form, and the melody of music breaks the air. Here are a couple of verses from his "Soul Warblings."

"You see in men, too, what you think,
 Also in books and teaching,
 The noble or the opposite,
 Good, or poor worthless preaching.
 "Some men have lost all power to see
 Good in their fellow-creatures;
 The finest actions, words, and deeds.
 To them have baseful features."

His gifts are many and varied, but they are all laid at the feet of the Master, for His glory and service. Genial and brotherly, he has the respect of all who know him. He has served the church of his choice right nobly for forty years, and all will echo the prayer that his days may yet be many, and his strength be equal to them all.

Mr. WILLIAM PERRYMAN (Chagford).

FROM his youth the subject of this brief sketch has been a devoted worker in the Chagford Circuit, the prosperity of which is largely due to his consecrated service. The very soul of loyalty, he has demonstrated in his own experience the moral and spiritual value to a circuit of faithful, persistent plodding in the high interests of the Kingdom. His has been the joy of added strength, of spiritual vision, and of moral conquest. To him has been granted the inspiration of witnessing four weak, dying churches raised to positions of numerical strength and spiritual vitality. His influence is personal and direct, and is frequently followed with permanent ethical results. It is reported that nearly the whole of the farmers in a certain neighbourhood were won to the acceptance of Nonconformist principles through his influence—a conquest and a tribute which few persons have the right to claim.

He is a generous supporter of the denomination. Its claims upon his sympathy and support are willingly recognised and responded to by financial assistance and personal service. For many years he has enjoyed the confidence of nearly all the leaders in the Connexion, many of whom have ever found Christian hospitality and spiritual inspiration in his home. Being a local preacher, he is attached to the members of the larger ministry. As a “travelling preacher” within a limited area, he is greatly appreciated. He possesses considerable originality and a fine sense of humour, and there is a freshness in his thought and method

which grips an audience, and enlists its attention and interest. Some years since "Claudius Clear" found his way to Chagford, and worshipped at the Bible Christian Chapel. The preacher was a little man, "dressed in a tweed suit," and the sermon made such a favourable impression upon his distinguished hearer, that most encouraging references were made to the preacher and his sermon in a subsequent number of the *British Weekly* by Dr. Nicoll. Needless to say, the preacher was Mr. Perryman.

His direct, personal influence is observed in a striking manner in the conversion and transformation of Mr. William Ready, whose life-story is familiar to all Bible Christians. This "son in the Gospel" still writes the most affectionate epistles to his "father in the faith," and even now, such is the strength of the bond between them, that it is a holy joy to Mr. Perryman to point out to visitors who desire it the exact spot where the orphan lad emerged from the darkness into the light everlasting.

Beloved by his ministerial and lay brethren, Mr. Perryman has been elected to positions of honour in the Connexion, and is a member of the Local Preachers' Fund Committee, in the work of which he manifests a keen interest. His presence and counsel at the quarterly meeting are highly valued. Unlike the majority of his brethren, Mr. Perryman keeps a record of his ministerial service, and from this I gather that, during his forty-two years as a local preacher, he has travelled nearly twenty thousand miles and preached on three thousand different occasions. "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Rev. DANIEL MURLEY.

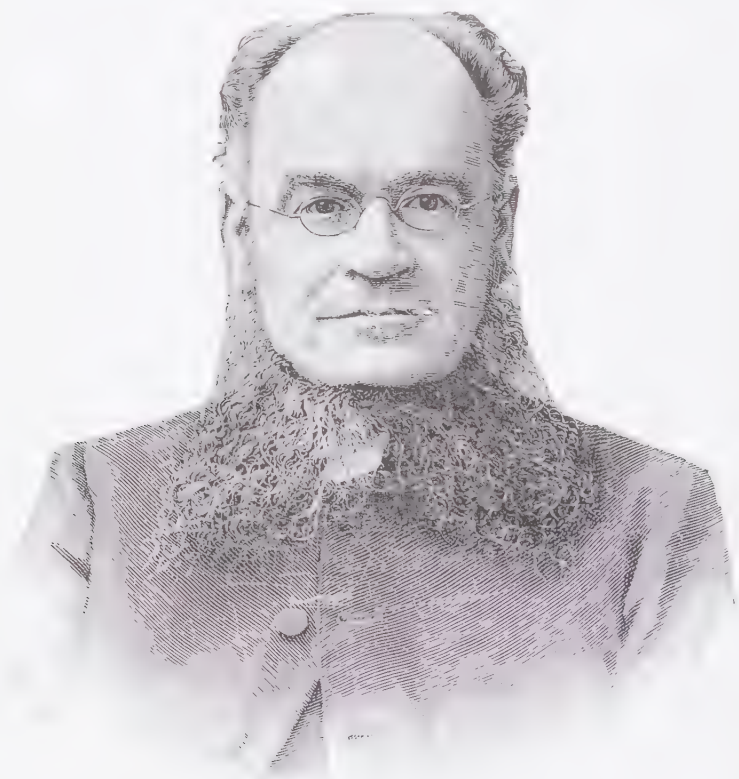
(President of Conference, 1896).

AT Ashwater, in 1865, a great revival took place, which greatly influenced the subject of this sketch, and did much to determine his future career. He was a local preacher for three years in the Holsworthy Circuit, and entered the ministry in 1866. When, in 1896, Mr. Murley was made President of the Conference, a writer in the *Bible Christian Magazine* referred to him in the highest terms, and I cannot do better than repeat here what was then written. The writer said :—

“Mr. Murley’s sterling worth has long been known to his brethren in the ministry, and to our people generally, and several years ago he became the superintendent of the district, and he was continued in that office several years in succession. The office of Secretary of the Conference was thrust upon him in 1894, and he was, against his own wish, retained in that ‘place of power’ the following year, and at the Conference of 1896 he was elected President by a practically unanimous vote.

“Of his mental and moral stature, it may be truly said as of his physical, he has been squarely and solidly built. His chief power, happily, has always been in what he *is*, rather than in what he has accomplished. In the pulpit his hearers consciously realize that, by the grace of God, *virtue* dwells *in* him, and often proceeds from him. This never depends on celerity of thought or mental agility in general, but on character and spiritual

attainments. His speech, however, not infrequently ‘glows into beauty, and melts into poetry.’ And is it not right that a *loving* thought be ever clothed in a *lovely* word? His vocabulary is choice rather than copious. If not a great orator or a popular leader, he is a prudent adviser and a



staunch friend. Like Barnabas, he is ‘a true son of consolation.’ He has learned the lesson well, how to ‘speak a word in season to him that is weary.’ His preaching is instructive rather than arousing, and he would not care, we judge, to speak of ‘the *terrors* of the Lord’ except to

‘beseech men to be reconciled to God.’ *Warning*, even to be effectual, must become *teaching* of the highest and best type. His natural temperament, in combination with his knowledge and piety, has helped to save him from the error into which many preachers have been betrayed in dealing with souls, viz., either ignoring or minimising their accountability to God. Every man is, in the highest sense, a voluntary agent, and not merely a bit of machinery.

“Mr. Murley has been a diligent student. He never willingly exchanges, we should imagine, the pleasant companionship of his books for the small courtesies of social life, or the less congenial and often heated atmosphere of the business meeting. His ‘Life of John Carter, the Missionary,’ proves that he possesses literary skill, and is capable of much greater efforts in that direction. An article of his, in answer to the question ‘Are the Puritans worth studying?’ shows that he is familiar with unfrequented bye-paths of knowledge, and that he can point out their chief characteristics. He carefully prepares for all his public efforts, speech as well as sermon. He would scorn to offer ‘unto the Lord his God,’ or even to his fellow-men, that which had ‘cost him nothing.’ It is *beaten* oil alone which has to be used in the sanctuary. In the absence of the injunction, ‘Give attendance to reading,’ for his own sake and for the sake of his hearers, for the delight it would afford to himself, for the benefit it would be to them, he would have followed that course. In a word, Mr. Murley is a fine example of the eminence to which a man who has few advantages to begin with, and has

had incessant public duties to perform, can attain by 'buying up his opportunities,' and whose very efforts at self-improvement have been successful, because it has been his grand purpose to make the cross of Christ the theme of his preaching, the salvation of souls the aim of his ministry, and the glory of God the end of his life."

Mr. H. D. COLLINS (New Brompton).

MR. Henry Dunk Collins, steward of the Chatham Circuit, and an influential member of the Connexional Committee, is a hereditary Bible Christian. While writing we have before us the Minutes of the Local Preachers' Meeting, held in the Bethesda School-room, New Brompton, on June 22nd, 1824, with James Thorne presiding. At that meeting it was resolved that Ephraim Collins, the grandfather of the subject of this sketch, should be received as an approved local preacher. It is an interesting fact that not only was Mr. H. D. Collins's father and grandfather associated with the denomination, but his children and children's children are identified with the same cause and carrying on the same work.

Mr. Collins was born on November 30th, 1848, at which period his father was connected with the Bible Christians in the Chatham Circuit. His boyhood days were for the most part spent in Rochester. When a young man he migrated to America, and was converted one Sunday morning

in the Erie Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Cleveland, Ohio, in 1871. He immediately signed the pledge, and commenced temperance work, being one among others to form the first temperance lodge in Cleveland, U. S., which is flourishing to day.

In 1874 he returned to England, and came to live at New Brompton, where he joined the



society at Park Road. He immediately became a teacher in the Sunday school and a member of the choir, and has belonged to both of these institutions ever since, having been president of the choir for twenty-five years, and a superintendent of the Sunday school, first as assistant and then as senior, for twenty years. On the retirement of Mr. John Coles, six years ago, he was appointed society steward.

Though Mr. Collins holds many important offices, it is not because he is ambitious. In every case the honour has been thrust upon him by his brethren, who have been quick to recognize his sterling qualities. In some instances he only undertook the duties when no one else could be found willing to bear the responsibility. The work he loves most, and which God has abundantly blessed, is the work amongst the young. The band of hope, over which he has presided for seven years, is now the second largest in Kent. During his superintendency the Sunday school has made rapid strides, and at present consists of over five hundred scholars, divided into three departments: (*a*) the infant school, which meets in the lower room, (*b*) the intermediate school, which meets in the upper room, and (*c*) the adult school, which comprises the adult class and the senior and junior Bible classes. This third school numbers approximately one hundred scholars over fourteen years of age. It assembles in the church for opening and closing exercises, and during the interim some classes adjourn to their respective class-rooms, the others being accommodated in the church.

It is worthy of record, as it is worthy of emulation, that the schoolrooms at New Brompton were built by our own members and friends, who at that time (1888) were chiefly dockyard employees. The builder's estimate was over £700 for one room, whereas the friends built two rooms for less than £400. In this work Mr. Collins took a leading part, being both architect, quantity surveyor, and clerk of works, and an inspection of the premises will best prove how efficiently he and

his helpers carried out their task. The work took three months to complete, and was proceeded with under much difficulty, though amid much rejoicing. The men came to their work as early as 4 a.m., and then went to the dockyard, returning to the schools in the evening, where they had a hasty meal, and continued their work until midnight. During that time of stress and strain, though there were never less than twenty-five men engaged on the building, there was not a single accident or case of illness, and no man lost an hour from the yard. These remarkable facts were rightly interpreted as signs of the Divine approval and blessing. For many years Mr. Collins was the teacher of the young men's Bible class, and no better testimony to his faithful and fruitful teaching is needed than the fact that three members of that class are now in the ranks of the Christian ministry.

Neither minister nor church could desire a more efficient and painstaking worker than Mr. Collins has proved himself to be. Wise in counsel and in labours abundant, his abilities and character have won for him the esteem and confidence of the church with which he has been so long and so honorably associated.—(E. E. L.)

Rev. RICHARD EDGCOMBE.

ALTHOUGH a Cornishman, and a lover of his native soil, during the thirty-eight years of his ministerial life Mr. Edgcombe has never "travelled" in a Cornish circuit. Invitations have reached him for his services

in Cornish circuits, but, for reasons that are not quite obvious, he has never given them a sympathetic response. He was born in the year 1844



at Launceston, where his father was a tradesman covering a period of forty years. For more than fifty years his mother was a member of the Bible Christian Church, and her home was ever a resting-

place for its ministers. Of the family of eleven Richard was the eighth child, and when about fifteen years of age the spiritual crisis in his life was reached. Joining the church, he set himself to sacred tasks, and did successful work as a Sunday school teacher and local preacher. This latter task was thrust upon him, the superintendent minister (Rev. W. Gilbert) justifying his action in putting Mr. Edgcombe's name on the plan by saying it was the right thing to do, and that "no angel would come down from heaven to tell him he was called to preach," reminding him at the same time that he had no impediment in his speech. For five years he rendered acceptable service as a local preacher in the Launceston Circuit, and this experience he found useful in after years.

Accepted as a probationer for the ministry in 1867, he was appointed to Faversham, where he remained three years, having as his superintendent the Rev. T. W. Garland, who was fond of gently informing the congregations that his young man could "pray and preach like thunder and lightning." He was received into full Connexion at the Hicks Mill Conference of 1871. During the first ten years of his ministry hundreds were led to Christ through his instrumentality, some of whom are now Christian ministers, local preachers, or officers of the church. He was an evangelist of the old school, and used in his services the gift of song as well as that of ordinary speech. When in the Weare Circuit he was requested by the Connexional Committee to visit Durham. Ever willing to serve the Connexion, he went, and as a result

between forty and fifty persons were formed into societies, and these now compose the Sunderland Mission.

After one year in the Forest of Devon he was pressed to accept the post of superintendent, and at the Torquay Conference of 1877 the appointment was made. Much against his will, after three years in this circuit he was appointed to Newport (Mon.), where, within twelve months, he was successful in building the present Commercial Road Church, raising towards its cost the sum of about £900. From Newport, where he spent five happy years, he proceeded to Swansea, where he restored the building, erected new school and class-rooms, and saw the completion of a new schoolroom at Hafod. Chatham was his next sphere, and during his pastorate the neat little sanctuary at Stoke was erected, the schoolrooms at Union Street improved, land for a new chapel at Rainham purchased, and the missionary money raised from £60 to £100. After two years at Jubilee (London) he went to Barrow, where he spent four of the happiest years of his ministry. He was elected President of the Free Church Council, to which he rendered acceptable service. At his farewell meeting the signal of Divine blessing was vouchsafed in the conversion of about a dozen young men and women.

Blackburn, Sheerness, and Crondall have been successive spheres of his ministry. At the Conference at Exeter in 1905 he was granted a year's rest. More favoured than some of his brethren, his has been the delight of visiting Ireland, Scotland, France, and Switzerland, scenes which many would

like to witness, for both pleasure and profit. During the thirty eight years of his ministerial life he has filled many spheres, and played many parts. Possessed of boundless energy, he has sung, prayed, preached, lectured, and begged in the interests of the circuits in which he has laboured, and, when the day of reckoning comes, it will be seen that his labours will compare favourably with many of his contemporaries who have attained loftier official positions. Mr. Edgcombe married the eldest daughter of Mr. Edward Biss, of Bath. Although at the time of writing he is tarrying for awhile in the quiet places, he hopes to resume his work, and to prosecute it with energy until the shadows gather, and the time arrives to say, "Farewell."

Rev. JOHN BOTHERAS, F.S.Sc.

IF ever a man had a genius for being beloved it is the present Principal of Stafford College; and should the secret of such genius be sought, it would probably be found in an affectionate solicitude for the welfare of others, and a ready appreciation of all that is good and loveable in every one. No one loves the company of his brethren in the ministry more than he does, and with none is it a greater privilege for them to associate. The history of his pilgrimage from the place of his birth, near Penzance, in the year 1846, to the flourishing school over which he now presides, is too full of incident to admit of more than the barest outline. Moreover, it is a history containing more glowing colours and deeper shades

than fall to the lot of many. The human instruments of all that was good in his early life were chiefly the gracious influence and fervent prayers of his mother, as well as the winsome Christian life



and persuasive appeals of the sainted Henry Hosken, whose memory as an ideal class leader is sacredly treasured by a large number. He first essayed to preach in the little chapel at Tregarthen, in Cornwall, when a little over seventeen years of age : and though

he entered the ministry when twenty one, he had previously done useful work as Sunday school teacher and superintendent. From the first, his gracious, cultured personality and unusual gifts of eloquence made a deep impression on his listeners. When ordained at the Hicks Mill Conference, in 1871, he was recognised as a brother of distinction, and the following circuits in which he has travelled can provide hundreds who would gladly testify to the abundant fulfilment of the high promise of his youth, viz., Somerton, Bristol, Sheerness, Shanklin, Brighton, Devonport, Truro, Torrington, and Forest Hill.

Unhappily, as one thinks, the life so unusually endowed was fitted in a tabernacle too frail to endure the strain; and thus, besides what he has been, he himself, in spite of a cheerfulness well-nigh perennial, sometimes dwells wistfully on what might have been. As early as 1883 he was compelled to relinquish his work as General Sunday School Secretary through collapse of health. As a member both of the General Connexional and College Committees, however, he was able for many years to render valuable service, and to-day his presence is always welcomed at the meetings of the Book Committee, of which he has been a member since 1897. His convictions, firmly and intelligently formed, have been always fearlessly expressed. Few men have exhibited a more perfect illustration of the possibility of being both tender of heart and mighty in courage. Many readers of the *Bible Christian Magazine* will recall his powerful indictments of the arrogance and priestly pretensions of High Churchmen. Articles

from time to time appeared, bearing such titles as "Clerical Lawbreakers," and "The Encroachments of Sacerdotalism"; while in a controversy with Canon Carter and the Vicar of Hartland on ecclesiastical assumptions, he easily vanquished his opponents by force of truth deftly stated. Among other contributions to the same periodical mention might be made of "The Magi and the Babe," "The Christian Laws of Recreation," "The Preachers of Wild Wales," and "A Plea for Reverence in Modern Life." His tongue and pen have more than once eloquently illustrated the heroism and saintliness of such men as William Carey, Thomas Chalmers, and Christmas Evans.

Since the year 1874, the gracious partner of all his joy and sorrow has been a wife, than whom, he believes, no man ever had a better; and he has been known to point to Proverbs xxxi, 10—29, for her character sketch. Mrs. Botheras is the youngest sister of the late Mrs. Terrett, known to thousands for her enthusiastic and distinguished service in the cause of total abstinence. Two sons and a daughter generously and effectively support their parents in the conduct of the College; and of these Mr. Botheras recently wrote, "Three affectionate bairns, the joy of our hearts, long ago consecrated to Christian service."

The story of ill-health is never an easy one to write, and there are phases in the life of Mr. Botheras which are almost pathetic—only a firm belief in the guidance of a merciful Father saves it from being this. Just when his powers seemed ripe for many years of much needed service, and his brethren were eager to place him

in the Presidential chair, it was seen that his health was unequal even to the strain of the ordinary ministry. A voyage to South Africa, and a later visit to Australia, where he was the honoured and happy guest of Sir Samuel Way, failed to restore sufficient strength. In 1897, therefore, at the Exeter Conference, he was superannuated, and all then present will recall the keen regret felt by the Conference at so great a loss. It would be wrong, however, to suggest that the distinguished Head of Stafford College is a gloomy valetudinarian, for, though he still often fights the fight of faith in weakness and pain, he was divinely led in purchasing the school at Forest Hill, which ever since has gone on increasing in numbers and usefulness. The college is now a centre for the College of Preceptors' Examinations, and is recognised by the Board of Education as a secondary school, while in 1902 the Principal was elected an honorary Life Fellow of the Incorporated Society of Science, Letters, and Art (Lond.). One devoutly trusts that for many years he may be spared to enjoy his magnificent library of much-loved and well-read books, and the true comradeship of a circle, ever widening "with the process of the suns."—(R. P.)

Councillor W. G. BOTHERAS, M.A.

IT may be open to doubt which is the greatest honour, to be the son of the Rev. J. and Mrs. Botheras, to be the Vice-Principal of Stafford College, or to be a councillor for the borough of Lewisham. Each reader may be

allowed to settle the point for himself, but there can be no doubt that Mr. W. G. Botheras would instantly decide in favour of the first. At any rate, it is to the influence of good parents and



of the class meetings, led by his mother at Truro and Devonport, that he attributes his conversion, though he first publicly professed himself as a disciple of Jesus Christ at the close of a mission held by Gipsy Smith at Truro in 1887. As he

was born at Shanklin in 1875, it will be seen that his Christian life began when he was twelve years of age. His activities as a servant of Christ may be said to have begun as Sunday school teacher and Bible-class leader at Torrington, during the six years of his father's pastorate in that town. All who have heard him speak in public are impressed at once with the fact that, though only thirty, he is no novice in the art of addressing an audience. With a coolness and deliberation surprising, considering his father's impassioned eloquence, he adroitly presents his points in well chosen and even polished English. He first preached in a Wesleyan Chapel at Monkleigh, near Bideford, in 1892, and two years later was received in the quarterly meeting at Torrington as an approved local preacher, on the motion of the late beloved Alderman Vaughan, J.P., C.C. The same year his name was placed on the Shebbear plan, and he refers with gratitude to the encouragement given him by that kind-hearted and wise pastor, the Rev. H. Down. He soon had serious thoughts of offering for the ministry, and on coming to London began to study with a view to this work, meanwhile holding the position of lay pastor of the Park Place Church, Eltham. It is idle to speculate what he might have done as a Bible Christian minister, though it is easy to believe that his devotion to Christ, his evangelical fervour, his splendid gifts of intellect and speech, his shrewd knowledge of men, and withal his keen sense of humour, would assuredly have commanded success. When, however, his father, early in life was superannuated through ill-health, he, with

filial loyalty, felt that his duty as the eldest son was to remain at home and assist in the great educational enterprise which the family undertook. In this he followed the dictates of love, and the counsel of that prince of young men's counsellors, the Rev. T. Braund.

His preaching gifts were not allowed to rest unused, though the ministry was no longer the objective, for during the ministry of Dr. Marshall, and later of Dr. Townsend, in Forest Hill, he was frequently in demand as a supply at their church, though it is only fair to say that recently he has not preached half as often as he should have done, a fact due to the slight demand made on local preachers in a London suburb, where nearly every church is practically a pastorate. His work on public bodies has been unusually heavy, and as a member of the Free Church Executive, the Lewisham Liberal Executive, and the London Joint Committee of the Private Schools' Association, he has given himself with ungrudging devotion to their claims. Perhaps, however, his personality was first publicly felt when, as a young man of twenty-eight, he dared, with five other Progressives, all much older than himself, to contest the ward of Forest Hill, which had not returned a Progressive to the Boro' Council for seventeen years. His gifts were then readily recognised, and the six not only swept the board, carrying every seat, but Mr. Botheras easily headed the poll, and secured a larger number of votes than had ever been previously given to any individual. He has served on many of the committees, having been chairman of two, and is now Chief Whip of the

Progressive Party. It became commonly known, just before the 1905 mayoral election, that he had so commended himself to his colleagues on the Council, that there was a general desire to make him Mayor of Lewisham, the second largest borough in London. A local paper, a few days before the election, in an important communication, said of him, "He possesses the confidence of the electors in a high degree, and he has the charm, tact, and administrative ability necessary for the high office." Subsequently, he was nominated at three separate meetings for the mayoralty; but he refused, recognising that the demands of his school work were too great.

He was educated at Truro College, Shebbear, University Correspondence College, Cambridge, and University Tutorial College, London. At Shebbear he came under the healthy and powerful influence of Mr. Ruddle, and no doubt his skill and tact as a teacher, to which Prof. Harley, M.A., F.R.S., and Rev. R. Tuck, B.A., have borne witness, were inspired by a study of Mr. Ruddle's methods. Probably too "the cultured self-restraint which gives him a quiet power over the boys, the exemplary life and high moral principles" to which these same gentlemen testify, were strengthened by contact with that virile and commanding personality. When his thoughts turned towards teaching, he easily qualified for the teachers' diploma in the theory and practice of education. In 1898 he matriculated at one of the oldest Presbyterian Universities in America, and later received *honoris causâ* from the same university the degree of M.A. In 1904 he, in company with his father, was

registered as a secondary teacher in Col. B. of Teachers' Register. Among the firstfruits of his literary output may be mentioned a prize essay on "The Federation of the Australian Colonies," in which the competitors were "Past and Present Shebbearians." For several years he has edited a bright little magazine known as *The Staffordian*, and he is a frequent contributor to the public Press on matters of municipal and educational interest. His work in the Forest Hill Church is highly prized. As steward and elder, his service is faithfully and cheerfully rendered. The road before him is, we trust, a long one, and it will, we doubt not, bring many well-deserved honours. Nor do we doubt that he has moral fibre to withstand the deteriorating influences which are so frequently associated with place and power.—(R. P.)

Rev. JABEZ HONEY.

BORN at Beeston Farm, Marhamchurch, in 1845, and converted when only fifteen years of age, Mr. Honey has reached his threescore years, during forty of which he has been engaged in active Christian service. Before entering the ministry he was superintendent of the school and president of the band of hope at Derril. In 1868 he was received on probation, and appointed to Chatham. In this circuit he laboured zealously in the open-air, and lectured on temperance. At Rainham and Lower Halstow not less than three hundred pledges were secured,

in addition to which there were many conversions. From there he went to Portsmouth, where he spent three happy and prosperous years. At the



end of the first year he was publicly ordained at the Conference, held in 1872, at Bideford. On leaving Portsmouth in 1874 he assumed charge of the church at Forest Hill, London, but his stay

there was brief, and in the following year he went to Newport, Monmouthshire, where he ministered most successfully for three years, many being added to the church during that period. In 1878 he was transferred to Chichester, where, with the assistance of a colleague and several lay helpers, he had charge of four chapels (one in the city and three outside), in addition to a small mission room. While there Mr. Honey, by his energy and determination, secured the complete extinction of the debt on three chapels and the minister's house, and in the course of another year another house was purchased for the second minister, the building being presented to the church free from debt. Notwithstanding that clerical influence was very strong in Chichester, Mr. Honey laboured assiduously with much success, for before he left the congregation and membership had largely increased. While at Chichester, however, his health gave way, and for two years he was unable to again take complete pastoral charge.

Eventually recovering his old vigour and energy, he went to Stamford Hill, London, where he started a new cause, a church being built at a cost of £2,000. Whilst in this district Mr. Honey took a prominent part in various social movements, and assisted in organising a penny and free dinner movement, which was conducted at Tottenham for four years, and of which he was secretary. So successful did this movement become that the number of dinners in one year reached fully 10,000. Mr. Honey also assisted in the formation of the South Tottenham Branch of the Metropolitan Medical Association, having for its aim

the provision of medical assistance for the poor. Temperance work in this locality also received much attention at his hands. He resided at Stamford Hill six years, continuing the pastorate for two years after the expiration of the usual four-year term at the earnest request of the church, so that an opportunity might be given to him to perfect the various schemes in connection with the church which he had formulated. In 1890 he went by request and appointment of Conference to open a new cause at Barry, South Wales, where he remained five years, making his influence felt not only in church life, but also in the public life of the district. His work here proved most successful, since, in addition to the erection of a substantial building, numbers were converted and added to the church. Upon leaving he was presented with an illuminated address and a purse of gold, in recognition of services rendered.

In addition to the above circuits, Mr. Honey has laboured in Liphook, Jubilee (London), Clapham, Bodmin, and Mevagissey. He has been an ardent toiler, and has applied himself to social work, the cause of temperance especially receiving a large share of his attention. For about twenty years he filled the office of chapel secretary in four districts, and when at Bodmin he was appointed superintendent of the district. In Free Church Council work he has manifested considerable interest, and has ever been active in maintaining the principles of religious liberty. His ministry, covering a period of about thirty-eight years, has included a considerable amount of "spade work," honestly and faithfully done.

Mr. S. P. RATTENBURY, C.C., J.P.

(STOKECLIMSLAND, CALLINGTON).

THE name of Rattenbury is familiar to all Bible Christians, since it is one of the earliest and most prominent in the Connexion. For more than three-quarters of a century the doors of hospitality have been open to the servants of the denomination, and deep and permanent has been the interest manifested in every department of connexional life and work.

The subject of this sketch was born at Oldmill, on June 16th, 1840, and is now the chief remaining member of the family. Early in life he came under the influence of his sister, who took him to the Sunday school when he was only three years old. From that time to the present he has been actively associated with the Sunday school, having for more than forty years acted as superintendent. The spiritual crisis in his life occurred when he was about seventeen years of age, and from that period he has been an active Christian. In the Callington Circuit and the Connexion he has filled many of the most important offices, and is one of the leading laymen of the denomination. He has been described as "a loyal citizen, and a man of public spirit. He is a man of singularly bright disposition, and has a fount of humour, combined with good sense. Differences of opinion at a meeting when he is present can scarcely develop into angry or unpleasant feeling: and he has done more than a little to prevent lasting estrangement

among friends, both on religious and business matters."

His life as a citizen has been a busy and active



one, especially in matters affecting agriculture and the poor. He is one of the most valued members of the Launceston Board of Guardians, having for

more than thirty years served on its various committees, and for a number of years presided over its deliberations. For a long period he was a member of the Callington Highway Board, and his presence on most of the committees of that Board afforded excellent proof of the respect in which he was held by his colleagues. In 1889 he was elected a member of the County Council to represent the five parishes of Stokeclimsland, Lewant, Lawhitton, Southpetherwin, and St. Stephens. His work on this body has stamped him as being one of the most useful men in the county. For a lengthened period he has been connected with Taunceston and Callington Agricultural Association; also a director of Callington Waterworks Company, Callington Public Rooms and Coffee Tavern Company, and other public institutions. He was chairman of Stokeclimsland School Board for twelve years, and he has been a county magistrate for a similar period. As an authority on the cultivation of waste lands, his views are the result of personal experiments, for during the distress, occasioned through the stopping of Holmbush and Kelly Bray Mines, Mr. Rattenbury employed over eighty men, who were thrown out of employment, in reclaiming and bringing into cultivation sixty acres of waste lands.

His spheres of active service are manifold, and range from the purely religious in the Sunday school to the political platform and the magisterial bench. He is a staunch Liberal, a strong advocate of temperance reform, and lends an attentive ear to appeals for the wider distribution of the comforts of life. His marriage in 1880 to Kate, the only

surviving child of the late Mr. Thomas Symons, of Tregada, Lawhitton, secured him a lady of kindly disposition, and one who shares her husband's devotion and aspiration. Their lives have been fruitful in blessing to the neighbourhood in which they reside, and also to the denomination to which they are so devotedly attached.

Rev. WALTER BROWN.

MR. Brown was born at Kennerleigh, Devon, September 3rd, 1844, and was "born again from above" at the age of sixteen. Early in his history his life was threatened with what seemed like lock-jaw, but in answer to prayer he was restored. The vow he made at this period he has endeavoured to fulfil. In 1865 he became a class leader, and a month or two later his name appeared on the circuit plan. At the Lady-day Quarterly Meeting, held at Rackenford, in the Tiverton Circuit, he offered himself for the ministry, and was accepted at the following Conference, and placed on the "President's List of Reserve." In October he was sent to supply the place of Mr. Samuel Shortridge, in the Somerton Circuit. At the Conference of 1867 he was appointed to the Chatham Circuit, with Mr. Charles Denning as pastor. He has since laboured in the following circuits: Ashford, Hatherleigh, St. Just, Helston, Scilly Isles, South Petherton (now Crewkerne), St. Columb, Padstow, Elham, Pontypool (now Blaenavon), Southmolton, Kingsbridge, and Hastings.

Much of his time he devoted to conducting evangelistic missions—a form of Christian service in which he delighted. His labours in this direction were crowned with abundant blessing, especially in the Somerton, Chatham, St. Just, and Helston Circuits. Perhaps the revival at St. Buryan, in the St. Just Circuit, was the most notable, and



productive of the best results. In this place he laboured twelve consecutive weeks, the work resulting in the conversion of over one hundred persons. At Stoke, in the Chatham Circuit, the mission was also successful in the conversion of from twenty to thirty persons, some of whom remain to this day.

Although now on the superannuated list, Mr. Brown still manifests a lively interest in religious work, and few things afford him greater satisfaction than the fact that men are being brought to a knowledge of the truth. Pious, prayerful, devout, and faithful, no interest is so dear to him as the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom, for the realisation of which he labours and prays.

Rev. WILLIAM FRANCIS JAMES.

(Cardiff Pioneer and Australian Unionist).

MR. James was born at Truro, Cornwall, in 1846. Most of his early life was spent at Chacewater. He was educated at the National School there, and at Trevarth School. At the age of eighteen he was converted, and joined the Bible Christian Church at Zion, in the Redruth Circuit. Within nine months he began to preach. He entered the ministry in 1868, and after labouring successfully in the Tavistock, Exeter, Northlew, and Aberavon Circuits, he was appointed in 1874 to open a mission in Cardiff. In the following year he married Miss Swash, of Neath, who has been a true helpmeet.

The work in Cardiff began in the Swiss Hall, amid a raging storm, with a congregation of seven. Three previous attempts to establish a cause in the town, and other untoward circumstances, made the beginning difficult. But patient toil and faithful

co-operation, with the Divine blessing, prevailed. Llantrissant and Tonyrefail were worked with Cardiff. Three churches, a schoolroom, a manse,



and caretaker's cottage were built, at a cost of about £5,000, toward which, with missionary grants of £465, nearly £2,000 was raised, and over two hundred and fifty conversions took place.

The story is graphically told in Mr. James's "Seven Years' Pioneer Mission Work in Cardiff," which ran through three editions, and circulated in many lands. Queen Victoria accepted a copy, and *The Cardiff Banner* said—"The author put into a small compass the record of a great work, pursued with unslumbering vigilance, and carried on amid circumstances that needed the courage of a hero, the patience of a martyr, and the faith of an Apostle." Honoured men entered into his labours, and now, including Barry, an offshoot of Cardiff, on the ground superintended by Mr. James, there are 5 ministers, 10 churches, over 1,000 members, and upwards of 1,700 Sunday scholars; and some £350 is yearly raised for the Missionary Society. From Cardiff Mr. James went to St. Austell, where there was an increase of over 100 members, and £800 was obtained for new church buildings, one being in the ancient town of Fowey, where services had been held in hired rooms for fifty years.

Mr. James was appointed to South Australia in 1884. His ministry at Burra was much appreciated, and he built a manse, for which £520 was raised. During his first year in Adelaide there was an increase of 20 members, nearly 50 new sittings were let, and the receipts advanced by £300. In the second year he did much to arrange for the union of the Methodist New Connexion Church with the Bible Christian Denomination; and £800 was raised for trust property. Four years' work in Goodwood resulted in enlarged membership, and an improvement of £1,000 in trust estates. A like period at Orroroo and Port Germein, with three years in Port Adelaide, were

marked by many good effects. During the first eight years Mr. James was in South Australia one seventh of the total reduction of church debts of the denomination in the Colony were effected in his circuits. While in the Bible Christian ministry he superintended the erection of 12 church buildings, and the raising of £7,000 by special effort : he admitted over 1,000 persons into church fellowship, and left in his circuits nearly 400 more members than he found there. As Home Mission Secretary, Treasurer and Secretary of the China Mission, Chairman of Districts, Secretary and President of Conference, and the first President of Way College, he rendered valuable service. A sketch of Mr. James, with portrait, in *Pictorial Australian*, in 1892, closed with these words :—“ His gifts, piety, devotedness, and success in every circuit he has laboured in, and every office he has filled, have secured for him widespread esteem and affection : and he is justly regarded as one of the foremost members of the Bible Christian ministry in Australia.”

Mr. James's first lecture, in 1870, contained a section on “ The advantages of unity.” He was then interested in the attempt to unite the Methodist New Connexion and Bible Christian Churches in England. On reaching Australia he was grieved to see the rivalry and waste caused by divided Methodism, and resolved to work for union. As secretary of the Joint Committee, appointed in 1887 to further minor Methodist union in South Australia, he wrought with enthusiasm. Though disappointed at the immediate result, he was impressed with the strong desire in minor

Methodism for complete Methodist union, and he decided to make that his object. Early in 1891 published letters from his pen served to revive the discussion of union. Soon after he moved a resolution in favour of it in the Bible Christian Conference, and it was followed by the adoption of a similar motion in the Wesleyan Conference. In the same year twenty-two representatives of the three Methodist Churches in South Australia discussed union for five hours, and, with only one dissentient, passed a series of favourable resolutions. By sending copies of the report of this meeting, accompanied with letters, to numerous editors, Mr. James discovered that the Australian Press favoured Methodist union. A further result followed the memorable meeting. The dissentient referred to did not believe the Canadian union was so happy as had been represented. His words led Mr. James to seek authoritative information. Many pertinent questions were sent to the General Superintendent of the Methodist Church in Canada, and to two other leading ministers there. Their answers agreed, and were embodied in a pamphlet, entitled "Methodist Union in Canada—an object lesson for Australasian Methodism." Copies were sent to all the Methodist ministers in the Southern World, and altogether about 3,000 copies were circulated. All sections of the Press commended the pamphlet, which was a handbook in many debates, and lengthened extracts from it were read to the Grindelwald Conference of 1892.

The excessive strain of work so affected Mr. James's health that complete change was imperative, and he took a Colonial trip of 7,000 miles.

But it was a working holiday, for it embraced fifty sermons and lectures. Methodist union lectures were given in eight centres, and were heard by representative audiences, including scores of ministers. Two other pamphlets were published in 1893-4 respectively. For nine years Mr. James was secretary of the Methodist Federal Conference in South Australia. He planned, directed, and reported six country conventions to further union, and articles from his pen appeared in dozens of Australasian journals. For over ten years he was Australasian correspondent for *The Methodist Times* and *Christian Advocate*. His union articles in them fostered the union sentiment in England and America, and many warm editorial tributes were borne to the value of his communications. The historic sketch for the "Illustrated Souvenir of Union," published in 1904, was written by Mr. James, at the request of Rev. Dr. Fitchett.

At the first meeting of the three Methodist Conferences in Adelaide, the Rev. Dr. Burgess, President of the General Conference, said :—"For accurate and comprehensive knowledge Mr. James is absolutely unrivalled. He is the slave of the movement." In a biographical sketch of Mr. James, in *The Register*, Adelaide, for January 1st, 1900, is the following paragraph :—"When asked to state the primary motive and ultimate object of his union work, Mr. James answered—'The common motive of Christian life has lain behind my work. I could not have continued it all these years without the constraining love of Christ, and its correlative, the enthusiasm of humanity. I have felt as distinctly called to work for union as to

preach the Gospel. Parochial views never satisfied me. The question long ago was—What is best for Methodism, for Christianity, on this Island Continent, not only for to-day and during the next decade, but in coming generations and centuries, with their growing millions? The answer being Methodist union, I resolved to work for it with my might. Then I regard Methodist union here as part of a greater movement for one Methodist Church in each principal nation, and for making the Methodism of the world a close federation of churches for the spread of Christ's Kingdom. Further, I view Methodist union as part of a still greater movement for such Christian unification as will enable the churches to combine their common resources for the salvation of mankind. It may take centuries to reach the final goal, but if one does anything, however little, to help the cause, he will not have lived in vain.’”

Sir Samuel Way, Bart., presided over a representative meeting in Adelaide, at which Mr. James was presented with an escritoire made of solid English oak. It is replete with every convenience that could be wished for, and is mounted with a silver plate, bearing the following inscription: “Presented to the Rev. W. F. James, with a purse of gold, in recognition of his untiring, effective, and self-denying service for Methodist union in Australasia, 23rd August, 1900.”

Mr. James possesses abundant literature on Methodist union, and it is hoped he will write the story of Methodist union in Australasia for the perusal of Methodist people in other parts of the world.

Since the consummation of union in Australasia, Mr. James has done effective circuit work in the united church. On four occasions he has acted as Conference letter writer. He was General Secretary of the movement for celebrating, in South Australia, the Bicentenary of John Wesley's birth; he built, and opened free of debt, what proved to be the Wesley Bicentenary Church of the Southern World; and he was a member of the first General Conference of the united church, which appointed him the representative of Australasian Methodism at the British Conference of 1906.

In thirty-eight years of ministerial life Mr. James has crowded activities of a most fruitful character. His passion for Methodist union has burned with a steady flame, the cold waters of opposition and indifference being powerless to quench it. The dream of a Federated Methodism may be something more than a dream—it may be also a prophecy, for the fulfilment of which we may have to tarry long. But when it does come, few men will have greater reason for rejoicing than William Francis James.

Mr. JAMES E. VANSTONE.

(SHEBBEAR CIRCUIT).

BORN at Woodhead, Buckland Filleigh, about a mile and a-half from Shebbear College, on October 21st, 1853, Mr. Vanstone attributes his entrance into the Kingdom of God to the earnest intercessions of the Rev. Thos.

Braund, his decision for Christ being made at a mission at Black Torrington, conducted by the late Rev. John Collings. In 1878 he was appointed



society steward, and continued in that office, and also that of class leader, for about nineteen years. He has been a local preacher nearly thirty years, and has filled various offices in connection with

the band of hope and Sunday school. In 1883-4 and 1894-5 he was circuit steward, and was representative to the Conference at Jubilee in 1884, when he contributed the first £10 to start the China Mission. At that time he had serious thoughts of offering himself as a missionary to that distant land. He has contributed occasionally to the Magazine, and has read papers on Sunday school work at local conferences. His speeches and sermons reveal an acquaintance with literature beyond the average, and his mind is a storehouse of knowledge somewhat surprising for a man brought up in an isolated Devonshire village. He is a staunch Free Churchman, and unsparing in his labours to promote the interests of the Kingdom of Christ. Mr. Ruddle speaks of him as "a man of high intelligence, exceptionally well-read, honourable in all his dealings, and of keen spiritual intuition. As a boy at Shebbear he was a pattern of industry and accuracy, never shirking his work, never begging or stealing of others, but grappling unaided with difficulties till he overcame them. And in his case, as in a thousand others, the child was father of the man. Whatever he undertakes to do is well done. He allows neither hard work, nor the dulness of some, nor the ingratitude of others, to betray him into slovenliness. As a local preacher, he is highly prized by those best able to judge: but an inelegant manner and unmusical voice, sometimes almost inaudible, too often annoy the careless listener. And this is the more unfortunate, as Mr. Vanstone's sermons abound in clear conceptions of Divine truth, the fruit of conscientious study and a very varied experience.

Doctrinally he is something of a mystic, and the Gospel and Epistles of St. John are a very favourite subject of study with him. He is an ardent temperance reformer, a strenuous advocate of perfect religious equality, of social purity, and of arbitration in national affairs. Like many others in the Shebbear Circuit, he owes much to the character and ministry of the Rev. Thos. Braund. One can imagine the utter surprise of a university don, strolling into one of our country chapels, and seeing in the pulpit a man oddly dressed, unkempt, strange in manner, with a shrill, half-audible voice, uttering truths that would do no discredit to St. Mary's at Oxford, or King's College Chapel at Cambridge, illumined by a wealth of reading that many an undergraduate, and not a few dons, might envy."

Rev. JOHN THORNE (Australia).

(President of Conference, 1895).

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WHEN the Rev. John Thorne is spoken of as the son of the late revered James Thorne, of Shebbear, it is not infrequently done to accentuate the supposed contrast in their characters. That there are differences no man can deny; they are such as obtrude themselves on the dullest observer. Mr. James Thorne was, to the day of his death, a very early riser; his son is as habitually a late riser. Mr. James Thorne disliked tobacco almost as much as he disliked alcohol; Mr. John Thorne

thoroughly enjoys a pipe. Mr. James Thorne was orderly and methodical in all his ways. To a natural Bohemianism his son has added the care-free freedom of the ocean-voyager and the Colonial, and he sometimes sorely tries the patience of the



prim and "respectable." And yet such differences are only skin-deep. To the man who can see into the heart of things, the heredity of mind and soul are as obvious as the heredity of physique and features. There is, however, a contrast that is much deeper and more vital. Mr. James Thorne

excelled his son in religious enthusiasm, as certainly as the son excels his father in breadth of view and intellectual alertness. Mr. James Thorne was endowed with a very retentive memory ; his son's memory is almost phenomenal. To the outside observer he appears to spend but a fair average of time in general reading, and very little in serious study ; and yet he has a remarkably full and accurate knowledge of books, and men, and public affairs. If there is a subject in which he is less at home than in others it is mathematical and physical science ; and this arises, not from want of ability, but from want of liking and opportunity. On all questions of constitutional history, practical politics, and economics he is an expert, as familiar with the details of working as with the general principles which control and direct the workers. In common with his father, he has a keen sense of humour, and with it a power of swift logical induction and ready repartee that his father did not possess.

Admitting that his spiritual enthusiasm does not burn with the steady flame which was so remarkable in his father, yet in this matter also he is his father's son. For many years after his conversion he was the light and inspiration of nearly every revival in the neighbourhood of Shebbear. Gifted with an accurate musical ear and a fine tenor voice, he would lead the singing, and waken into life and interest the dullest congregation. As a local preacher he was highly-prized, and, what is more remarkable, nowhere more than in his own North Devon, and among his own people. Those who heard him preach at Portsmouth on Samuel,

the prophet-elect of Jehovah, may form a just estimate of his pulpit power.

I have always thought, however, that the British House of Commons was the place for which Mr. Thorne was pre-eminently equipped better, in my own poor opinion, than any other man I ever met. But while we see hundreds of men without a single qualification of head or of heart, save only descent or length of purse, sent to Westminster to legislate for a mighty nation, men like Mr. Thorne, who have the light in them to see what ought to be done, and the courage to do it, are shut out. Oh, the pity and the irony of it all ! Mr. Thorne ought to be to-day what John Bright was fifty years ago, and what thirty-five years ago men hoped to find in Joseph Chamberlain, the trusted Tribune of the Plebs. Few men understand the poor better than he—very few sympathise with them as sincerely. With poor Hodge he has been familiar all his life. He knows his strength and his weakness, his noble and his ignoble qualities, his privations, his temptations, the baleful monotony of his daily life, and the cruel charity of the boards of guardians, to whom he is forced but too often to appeal in sickness or old age. He knows why the brightest young men in his native Devon gather their little all together and troop off to London, or Liverpool, or Plymouth, resolved to take their risk, to sink or swim as the case may be, but at all events to escape the dreary drudgery of their fathers' lives. And in these days, when we hear on every side the parrot-cry "Back to the Land," we feel the more acutely the imperfections of our social system.

which shuts out from the Council of the Nation the men best prepared to make such a reform possible.

Meantime, Mr. Thorne is doing his appointed work in South Australia, gathering around him a group of young men who will be champions of freedom and righteousness when their leader's work is done. We think of the massive form and strong face of the man, his kindly smile, his good-natured raillery, and then of the knit brow and flashing eye when he hears of any case of cruelty or wrong, and we ask ourselves why it is that there is no one of his own blood to bear his name and to take his place when he is gone. This, at least, we know, and with this we must be satisfied—in the great drama of life father and son have played their parts, and the part of each was a noble one.—(T. R.)

**THOMAS, WILLIAM, MARTIN,
and NICHOLAS VERRAN (Hicks Mill).**

IN Bible Christian circles in Cornwall few names are better known than that of Verran—a name which has found a place on the roll of Hicks Mill Society for nearly three-quarters of a century. The experience of this society is, perhaps, one of the most remarkable in the history of the Connexion, containing features of the most romantic character, and expressive of a type of religious life and sentiment now seldom witnessed. The spiritual struggles and triumphs, the conflicts

and victories of hundreds of pious men and women who now enjoy "the rest that remaineth," afford abundant data for one of the most thrilling chapters in religious life and experience. A record of even a portion of the soul-experiences of the persons who have made Hicks Mill Society famous would provide abundant material for the sympathetic psychologist, and present to him aspects of religious sentiment and thought and life of the most interesting character.

To the sum-total of these religious experiences the four brothers mentioned above contributed not a little; and it is questionable if a similar story could be written of any other four brothers in the denomination. They were four of a long family, most of whom in comparatively early life consecrated themselves to the service of Christ. Michael Verran—a fifth brother—was a hero of the noblest type, a man who offered to sacrifice his life to save that of a fellow workman engaged in mining underground. Perceiving that both could not be drawn up the shaft together, and that death apparently must be the fate of one, Michael Verran offered to meet his death in the mine that the other might escape to the surface. When the explosion occurred, which he imagined would send him suddenly into glory, it was discovered that in the most wonderful and inexplicable manner he had been preserved without a single scratch or bruise.

THOMAS VERRAN, who was born on June 7th, 1815, and converted January 26th, 1836, was one of the most highly esteemed men in the district.

As a man of business he was highly respected, and wherever he went his religion was his companion. His word was his bond, and those who knew him could rely on his word for any amount, or in any matter of business. For many years he was an acceptable local preacher, superintendent of the school, and circuit steward. In all the institutions and enterprises of the church he took a deep interest. He was "a lover of good things and of good men." In addition to public worship, and his regular morning and evening devotion, the Scriptures were daily perused, and it was his delight, during some part of the day, to retire for private communion with God. His religious experience was rich and deep, and it was this which made his sermons so effective. He made no pretensions to greatness or eloquence as a preacher, but possessing an intimate acquaintance with Scripture, and gifted with sound common sense, his pulpit ministrations were always acceptable. His life and local ministry were beautiful with the "beauty of holiness," and his departure that of a saint who "walked with God."

WILLIAM VERRAN, differing somewhat in temperament from his brother Thomas, was a pillar in Hicks Mill Circuit for half a century. Residing on a small farm at Carnon, he made Quenchwell Chapel his religious home, and to it contributed some of its best wealth. For many years he was a devoted class leader, taking peculiar delight in listening to testimonies of the struggles and triumphs of his little flock. Rigid in his orthodoxy, he was averse to admitting persons to

membership on easy terms, and was emphatic in his demand for penitence, contrition, and faith. As a local preacher he was most acceptable, his sermons containing a large proportion of those verities which have been woven into his own spiritual experience. His personal life was the fountain from which he drew to refresh the lives of others. Devotion to his religious duties was one of the characteristics of his life, and by such devotion he not only greatly assisted to maintain the church at Quenchwell, but also affected for good the religious life of the neighbourhood. Strong in the strength derived from conscious spiritual relation with Christ, he was for a lengthened period one of the greatest pillars in the society, and when, at the end of 1905, after a life of more than fourscore years, he quietly glided into the unseen, the neighbourhood realised that a "man of God" had gone from their midst.

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MARTIN VERRAN entered the church at Hicks Mill when quite a young man, and continued a member until the end of his earthly pilgrimage. Early in his Christian life he entered upon active service, and in various ways—as Sunday school teacher, superintendent, class leader, and local preacher—rendered invaluable assistance, both to the local society and the circuit. Early prayer meetings, commencing at five o'clock in the morning, were at that time the order of the day at Hicks Mill, and it is on record that those gatherings were of the most helpful character, especially to the young men. The pure flame of holy devotion was there kindled and fanned, and

it was there that Martin Verran and others received much of their inspiration and strength. He delighted in prayer and class meetings, and ever regarded them as essentials to the true and permanent prosperity of the church. The spirit of devotion manifested in his religious duties was revealed in the affairs of every-day life. Shrewd, keen of perception, and possessing a large measure of common sense, he was a successful man of business, and by his diligence and industry won a position in the district creditable to both his head and his heart. Favoured by Nature with a strong, healthy physique, he was able to concentrate all the faculties of mind and body on the work to which he gave himself, and whether this were temporal or spiritual, he did it with his might. As nearly as possible, he approximated to the ideal presented by the Apostle in the injunction—"Be not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." Sickness was practically unknown to him till the end of his life, and then it was of short duration. His earthly pilgrimage covered a period of nearly seventy-five years, and when the end was near, the faith by which he lived was equal to all the demands made upon it, and he passed peacefully into rest. He was in many respects a healthy, strong, virile man, and his influence for half-a-century made for righteousness and goodwill.

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NICHOLAS VERRAN was the youngest of this band of brothers who assisted to mould the character of the society at Hicks Mill; but, unlike his brothers, Nicholas never ventured to ascend the pulpit as

preacher. Not content with pursuing his ordinary avocation in his own country, he ventured forth to seek a fortune in Australia. Strong and active as a young man, he surrendered his powers to the



acquisition of material wealth, and for many years toiled with increasing success. Returning in the prime of manhood to his native soil, he commenced farming in the neighbourhood of Hicks Mill Chapel, and here he remained until within a few years of

his decease. He took an active interest in the affairs of the Sunday school and society, and rendered acceptable service as teacher and steward. With his other brothers, he was warmly attached to the denomination, and the ministry ever found in him and them steady and staunch friends. Given to hospitality, for many years their dwellings were homes for the preachers, and both by night and day they were ever welcome to the shelter and rest of their hearths. To Hicks Mill Society and Circuit these brothers were both foundations and pillars, and it is questionable, now they have become pillars in another structure, if they will ever have successors equally true and strong and faithful. Thomas, Michael, William, Martin, and Nicholas Verran were pious, devout, and godly men, and their lives were fraught with purest blessing to the church and the world. They are no longer with us in the flesh, but of them it may be said that, being dead, they yet speak to us in clearest accents, and invite us to faith, loyalty, and devotion in the interests of the church, the kingdom, and the world.

Rev. J. H. SHILSON.

BORN at Chudleigh, Devon, early in life Mr. Shilson was initiated into the "mysteries of the Kingdom of God," and from the first hour of initiation the "mysteries" have gradually disclosed themselves to his alert and devout spirit. It was in March, 1865, at

Zion Chapel, Torquay, when the awakened soul was drawn to the Saviour, and about two years later Mr. Shilson was exercising his gifts in alluring others. At Hicks Mill Conference, in 1871, he



was received on probation, and at the Conference at Exeter, in 1875, he was received as a fully accredited minister. The circuits favoured with his services are Bideford, Newport (I. of W.), Liphook, Brighton, London (Jubilee), St. Austell,

Guernsey, Brighton (second time), Bristol, Exeter, and Sandown. When the late Rev. Samuel Allin broke down in health, Mr. Shilson, who at the time was "without pastoral charge," undertook the duties of superintendent of the Bristol Circuit, so that practically he has twice served the interests of this important cause.

It is no disparagement to say that Mr. Shilson, during his active ministry, never loomed large in the official life of the Connexion, the only positions he held being those associated with districts. His principal achievements have been in circuits, where steady, faithful, plodding toil alone produces beneficial results. His most successful pastorates were Guernsey and Brighton, both of which circuits have made considerable progress during the last twenty years. At Brighton Mr. Shilson made a daring experiment by engaging the late Henry Ward Beecher to lecture. The lecturer's fee being £100, paid before a sentence of the lecture was uttered, no flight of imagination is necessary to understand the risk of such a venture. What the financial result was report does not say, but I know that a similar experiment in the West of England proved disastrous to the promoters.

For some years Mr. Shilson has been "without pastoral charge," and this fact renders it difficult to write a lengthy sketch. It must not, however, be inferred that because he is not in the "full work of the ministry" he is ministerially idle. The circuit in which he resides receives considerable assistance from him as preacher, and in other directions his services are helpful. But those who know him best and esteem him highest regret that

he is not filling the larger sphere for which his temper and ability fit him. Having heard him preach on one occasion only—at St. Austell more than a quarter of a century ago—I am unable to characterise him as a preacher, but the simple fact that he has travelled in the above circuits shows that he is well able to sustain the best traditions of the pulpit.

Mr. H. J. STOKES (Aberavon).

TO know anything of Aberavon Circuit is to know Mr. Henry John Stokes, who was born in 1849, at Epping, in Essex, where he also received the new life and light seventeen years later. This early religious training outside the home was associated with the old Congregational Chapel of that town, the history of which dates back to the Cromwellian period, the present building, with its predecessor, covering a term of 300 years, thus proving a striking exception to the rule—that to be a good Bible Christian a man must be born one. He had, perhaps, a better inheritance, for from his ancestors, having worshipped there for many generations, he received by inheritance and early training a Puritan rock-foundation for his Christian life, upon which to build with the material supplied by the more emotional Celtic Methodism—a happy combination indeed. Possessed of an energetic spirit, he became not simply a church member, but interested himself deeply in the service of Christ, and commenced

work in the Sunday school ; but in 1870, at the age of twenty-one, he struck out, and came by a long bound to Monmouth town, in the buffer



county, between England and Wales, where he connected himself with the Congregational Church for the few months of his residence there. At the end of that year, however, he moved on to

Aberavon to open a branch business. There being no English Congregational Church, he joined the Bible Christians : and whilst his first entry may have been unnoticed, it may be said without flattery that it was the most important event in the church's history. The eagle eye of Bro. A. Trengove, who was then the pastor, perceived the latent powers, and set himself to develop them, with the result that Mr. Stokes soon found himself teacher of the young men's Bible class, and "on trial" as a local preacher. For the last thirty five years no one has been more devoted, or more acceptable in the pulpit, than that young man who, in 1870, was a stranger to Methodism and to South Wales. Mr. Trengove was succeeded by Mr. Hocking, who, from their first meeting until now, has exercised a very great influence on Mr. Stokes, and between whose families a friendship was formed which time has only served to strengthen. For over twenty years he was superintendent of the Sunday school, which office, with the leadership of the young men's Bible class, he relinquished only a few years ago. Being musically inclined, too, the choir found in him a genial and efficient conductor. With only a short break, he has been circuit steward for over twenty-five years, and is thus a well known figure at District Meetings and Conferences : and, until his health prevented, was one of the South Wales representatives on the Connexional and Missionary committees.

As treasurer of the Aberavon Trust Fund for the last twenty years, each successive pastor knows something of his valuable assistance. No trustee of Briton Ferry did more to preserve its life, even

when the lingering spark threatened extinction. It may be said he has always been a "minister's man," one in whom to confide, and on whose judgment and support it is safe to rely. Fervent in spiritual things, Mr. Stokes has also been diligent in business, of which the establishments he built up at Aberavon and Bridgend are abundant testimony. He is mentally and spiritually an all-round man. He soon saw that the true Christian should be a loyal citizen ; thus for seventeen years he was a member of the Aberavon Town Council, and in 1903 was unanimously chosen mayor of the ancient borough. He has been alderman for six years. One of the first members of the School Board formed in 1891, he continued with but a short break for twelve years, until its dissolution about three years ago. He has also, since 1895, represented the Town Council on the Board of Governors of the Welsh Intermediate School, which position he still holds, having been unanimously re-appointed at each triennial election.

And what shall I more say ? Space forbids me to tell of his Free Church Council Presidency in 1902, of his temperance work, missionary interest, philanthropic spirit, and those traits of character which have combined to make him what he is and has been—"loved at home, revered abroad." Any sketch, however brief, would be incomplete without a reference to Mrs. Stokes, who has been a most worthy help-meet, faithful to him in his various spheres of activity. She also was a Congregationalist, connected with the church at Bath, of which the renowned William Jay was minister for sixty years, and of whom she has some

memories. Mr. Stokes has seen his seven children become members of the church, and his daughters acting as organists for many years.

Never a robust man, and not sufficiently cautious in sparing himself, Mr. Stokes has needed during the last five years to give up much of his public work and take comparative rest ; but there is every reason to hope that, not having reached the allotted age, he will soon recuperate, and continue long to manifest the same kindly interest in those spheres of Christian service which have engaged his attention for so many years.—(W. R. A. B.)

Rev. RICHARD SQUIRE.

FRITHELSTOCK, in the famous Shebbear Circuit, was the early home of Mr. Squire. He was born April 25th, 1850, and was converted in February, 1866, during a revival that swept over the Shebbear Circuit. In the year 1870 he became a local preacher, and two years later went as a student to Shebbear College. A young man being needed in the Penzance Circuit, Mr. Squire was sent as a hired local preacher, and in 1873 he was accepted by the Conference as a probationer for the itinerant ministry. He was received into full Connexion at Torquay in 1877, and married in the following year. During his ministry, which has not been one of perennial joy and gladness, he has laboured in such circuits as Chatham, Faversham, Liskeard

(twice), Newport (Mon.), Southampton, Redruth, Taunton, &c.

When labouring in the Redruth Circuit he sustained an irreparable loss in the death of his wife. With a family of several children dependent upon him, the departure of his wife into the Silent Land sent an arrow into his soul, and produced a wound which even the power of time has failed to heal. The "valley of the shadow," entered in 1901, is still a valley of darkness, and the encircling gloom has not as yet given place to sunshine and stars.

Ever a toiler, Mr. Squire has done useful service in his circuits, and although not numbered among front-rank preachers, his public deliverances indicate careful preparation, and sympathy with those aspects of evangelical truth which have ever been the basis of Methodist teaching. He is a strong temperance reformer, and for the "noxious weed" he has but scant sympathy. Sympathetic in relation to foreign missions, he has evinced considerable interest in the China Mission, surrendering in 1903 one of his clever daughters for work in that distant field. What this meant to Mr. Squire none but those with a similar experience can possibly describe, since both daughters had a successful secular career before them, both having won at the same time the B.A. degree of London University. It was a noble gift to the denomination, and a gift highly appreciated. A son (Mr. E. R. Squire) is on probation in the home work, so that probably for many years to come the family will be closely identified with the ministry, and at home and abroad will be scattering the good seed of the Kingdom.

Mr. WALTER J. NICHOLLS (St. Austell).

THE youngest of three children, whose father died at the early age of twenty-eight, the subject of this sketch was born at Mount Charles, St. Austell, in 1851. Left fatherless when quite a child, his truest and most faithful friend was his mother, who lived to a good old age, and gave her best for the upbringing of her children. After a brief sojourn at Mount Charles British School, the lad attended the National School at St. Austell and the Church of England Sunday School. He became a chorister in the church choir, and for this a slight remuneration was given; but when the churchwardens abolished this slight recognition for services rendered, young Nicholls and the other choristers asserted their independence, and "went out on strike." How long the strike continued the records fail to show, but let it suffice that, so far as the subject of this sketch is concerned, he was so determined to maintain the struggle, that he never again found his way back to the choir.

Passing over with some of his companions to the Bible Christian School, he became a worker, and at the age of eighteen became a professed Christian. His natural gifts, which had been cultivated and developed in connection with a local popular recital company, were soon recognised by the officials of the church, and he was induced to become a local preacher. He speedily won popular favour, and his services were in constant demand as preacher and platform speaker. Some of his

early experiences were not without humour, as when, for instance, he had carefully prepared a discourse on the text, "My son, give me thine heart," and discovered that his congregation was



composed of five persons, all of whom were women. In revival movements he has manifested considerable interest, and the joy has been his of witnessing numbers of conversions.

Early in his Christian life he won the confidence of the church. When only twenty-four years of age he was sent as a representative to the Conference at Exeter in 1875, and on several occasions since he has attended the Annual Assembly, and actively participated in its deliberations and debates. As Journal Secretary, and speaker at the great missionary demonstrations, he has rendered the denomination effective service: and at the last Conference at Exeter, in 1905, the honour was his of seconding the resolution on Methodist union—a task which was also a test, successfully met and accomplished.

Mr. Nicholls gives a wide interpretation to the duties of Christian citizenship, and strenuously supports the plea that the spirit of Christianity and its ethical teachings should be carried into civic life. In the affairs of his native town he has played a conspicuous part, and few have been the movements, having for their object the uplifting of society, in which he has not been intimately connected. He has filled almost every public office. From their formation he has been a member of St. Austell Board of Guardians and Rural District Council, whilst in 1903 he was unanimously elected chairman of St. Austell Urban Council, which position gave him a seat on the magisterial bench. Here he came into prominence by championing the cause of "passive resisters." As might be expected, Mr. Nicholls has evidenced considerable interest in the Free Church Council movement. He was the first layman to be appointed to the Presidency of the St. Austell Free Church Council, and he has also filled the

Presidential chair of the West Cornwall Federation of Free Churches. It was in this capacity that he was chosen to represent the Free Churches of Cornwall at the Wesleyan Conference at Camborne.

In politics Mr. Nicholls is an ardent Liberal, and for several years has taken a very active part in furthering Liberal interests, both in his own division and in that of Torquay. Although connected with the local Press, he has not accomplished much in the literary world. A few articles and sermons from his pen have appeared in the *Bible Christian Magazine*, and the memorial sermon on the late Mr. Joseph Turner, a local preacher in the St. Austell Circuit for over fifty years, has been published separately. In various ways Mr. Nicholls has rendered conspicuous service to the St. Austell Circuit and the Connexion. In the young people of the church he has ever cherished the deepest interest, and feels legitimate pride that for many years he has been president of the Bible class connected with the St. Austell Church. Among his most prized possessions are a silver spirit kettle, presented by the members of this class, and a gold watch, given by his fellow workers in the Liberal party at St. Austell.

Whatever the disadvantages of his youth, Mr. Nicholls has not neglected the means of self-culture. He has made acquaintance with some forms of good literature, and his reading has been of great service to him as preacher and platform speaker. Careful in his preparation, with a fair command of good diction, his sermons and speeches, delivered with fervour and force, invariably command attention, and always contain a suggestive

thought or a telling phrase. Of a nervous temperament, and somewhat highly strung, in listening to his public utterances one is impressed with the thought that here, at least, is one who is giving not only his ideas, but also his life. There is force in every sermon he preaches, every religious address he delivers. For men like Mr. Nicholls at his best the Connexion has reason to be grateful.

Rev. ARTHUR HANCOCK.

(President of Conference, 1903).

ALL and well-proportioned, with face clean shaven, and nimble in movement as well as in speech, the subject of this sketch could easily be discovered in the midst of any audience, whether of ministers or of laymen. Like many of his brethren, Mr. Hancock is a Cornishman, and proud of his county. Born at Withiel, near Bodmin, on January 14th, 1855, he was led to Christian decision when only thirteen years of age, and this event in his life he attributes to the gracious influence of his parents, especially that of his mother. Those who, in private fellowship, have heard him speak of his spiritual experiences know the estimate he places upon the silent but potent influence of his mother, and how that to her he owes many of the best things in his life. His early education was received at Dobwalls, near Liskeard. In 1869 he became an apprentice to the drapery business, and preached his first sermon, when sixteen years of age, at Bridges

Chapel, Luxulyan. Two years later he offered himself as a candidate for the ministry, and spent a short time at Shebbear. In 1873 he was sent to Sevenoaks to render assistance to Rev. W.



Hawken, after which he was appointed to Bideford. In 1875 he was sent to Tavistock, thence to Portsmouth, where he completed his term of probation. He was ordained at Torquay Conference in 1877,

the Rev. John Gammon delivering the charge. Marrying Miss Jennie Holden in 1879, he was appointed to the Newport and Ryde Circuit. He has exercised his ministry in several important circuits of the Connexion, including Jersey, Devonport, Lee, Cardiff, and Plymouth. His ministry at Lee extended to eight years, during which term the chapel at Hither Green was built. Several of the principal official positions in the Connexion have been filled by him. Elected in 1889 as Sunday School Secretary, he continued to hold this office for ten years. In 1900 he was appointed Connexional Temperance Secretary, and in 1905 was re-elected for a second term of five years. He succeeded the late Rev. S. Allin as Home Missionary Secretary in 1902, and was elected to this office by Conference in 1903. In the same year, and at the same Conference, he received the honour of election to the Presidency. He is a member of the Joint Committee on Methodist union.

His labours, however, have not been limited to the denomination. In 1891 he was elected President of the Portsmouth Sunday School Union; in 1895-6 he was President of the Lewisham and Lee (London) Free Church Council; and in 1905 he became Vice-President of the Devon Christian Endeavour Union.

His versatile gifts have not been confined to lecturing, preaching, and speech-making. Since 1888 frequently has he contributed articles to the Connexional Magazine, and in 1899 he published a booklet, "Why we are Nonconformists," which has had a good sale, two editions having been

disposed of, a third now being on sale. Following the example set by presidents of other denominations, at the expiration of his presidential year Mr. Hancock published a volume of sermons bearing the title "The Sacrificial Life." The book has met with favour, and has been reviewed with commendation by the Press. It contains the elements characteristic of its author, and is permeated with evangelistic earnestness and fervour.

From the commencement of his ministry he has been fervently evangelical. The note of passion for souls is struck in almost every sermon. Gifted with an imposing and attractive appearance, a rich musical voice—which he sometimes uses in singing the Gospel as well as in preaching it—he presents the fundamental truths of the Christian religion in a form easily understood by his hearers, accompanied by what "the fathers" would call a "holy unction," which softens the heart, awes the spirit, and disturbs the conscience. His sermons are carefully prepared, written fully before being preached. Blessed with a retentive memory, after reading through the written sermon or speech once he is able to deliver it with ease and confidence. Twice only has the writer known him to read from manuscript. His command of the ordinary forms of speech, his fondness for, and aptitude in, the making of musical phrases, render listening to him an interesting and pleasant experience. His gift of telling a story to illustrate or drive home to the conscience a point in his sermon is unsurpassed in the denomination. The story may have been heard many times before, but his impressiveness of manner and accent impart a freshness and force

which make the story most effective, and bring moisture to the eye and conviction to the heart. He is orthodox to the very core, Biblical criticism and the findings of science never disturbing his faith in the fundamentals of the Gospel, or shaking his confidence in the facts of spiritual experience. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Jonah in the whale, and Saul's experience outside the walls of the city of Damascus are verified facts to him as much as the existence of Napoleon. His faith in Scripture is full and strong, and the shadows of doubt or mental perplexity in relation to the Bible never dim his soul, nor hide from his view the light that streams from the Orb Divine. Positive, emphatic, and with much assurance, he preaches without misgiving the three R's — "ruined by the fall, redemption through the blood of Christ, and regeneration by the Holy Ghost." These have been, and still are, the fundamental doctrines proclaimed in his ministry, with the result that he has been blessed with the experience of witnessing hundreds added to the churches over which he has presided.

Early in his ministry he came under the influence of the Rev. Robinson Watson, a Wesleyan minister, who pointed out to him the possibilities of the Christian life, and the spiritual attainments necessary to a successful minister. The impression made upon him at this time has never been erased, and again and again he has witnessed before large audiences to the blessedness of perfect surrender to the will and service of Christ. He is a strong advocate of what is termed "the higher life," and for some years was one of the editors

of *The King's Highway*, a magazine devoted to the teaching of the doctrine of entire sanctification. This doctrine he believes and preaches, but he is not unconscious of the fact that it is less difficult to proclaim it from the pulpit than to incarnate it in the struggles and conflicts and tragedies of life. Between the ideal and the actual there are not infrequently vast tracks of virtue undiscovered and untrodden.

In the churches where he has ministered he has won hosts of friends, his geniality, brightness, and sociability making his presence most pleasant and agreeable. His four years' pastorate at Devonport in the eighties will long be remembered, especially by many who were brought under his personal influence, and who commenced to lead life anew through his direction. As President of the Conference, he gave himself without reserve to the service of the churches, and his year of office was marked by spiritual progress and financial prosperity throughout the denomination. His life and ministry have been fraught with spiritual blessing to many, but never, perhaps, has he been better prepared to serve the churches and extend the Redeemer's Kingdom than he is to-day.

Mr. NORMAN BRAUND (Paignton).

BORN at Milton Damerel, Devon, in 1855, Mr. Braund was led into the light when an apprentice to the drapery business at Hatherleigh. In 1875 he proceeded to London, and for some time, because of distance,

he worshipped with the Congregationalists, but on the opening of Kilburn Chapel he returned to his own denomination. His interest in the church at Kilburn soon opened for him spheres of usefulness, and he became society and chapel steward. The Sunday school also claimed his attention, and he was appointed leader of a young people's Bible class and superintendent. During his stay in London he was closely associated with the Sunday School Union and the Children's Special Service Mission.

Marrying in 1879, he removed from London to Paignton to establish a business for himself. Bible Christians in Paignton at that time were neither many nor prosperous, the rented room used for worship being scantily attended. The old Congregational Chapel was subsequently purchased and renovated, a Sunday school was established, and Mr. Braund was appointed superintendent. In Sunday school work he takes great delight, and is reputed to be almost an ideal superintendent. He has an able colleague in his devoted wife, who for more than twenty years has been a successful teacher of a Bible class. Within recent years the premises have been enlarged and renovated at a cost of about £450, and considerable progress is reported in both church and school.

In addition to filling official positions in the school and circuit, Mr. Braund has evidenced considerable interest in educational affairs. For nine years he was a member of the old School Board, and during a portion of the time served as vice-chairman. He is now a member of the new authority, and occupies the post of chairman. The

Council day schools, for which he has done so much, are reported to be among the best in Devon. Mr. Braund is also a member of the Higher Education Committee, and is one of the governors of a charitable fund, the object of which is to provide education for the poor. Attempts have been made to induce him to serve on the Urban Council, but in vain, his time and energy being already fully employed.

Loyal to his Master and Lord, Mr. Braund is also loyal to the Connexion, and his spirit and character count for much in the upbuilding of the church at Paignton, and the sweetening of the lives of those who gather around him.

Rev. JOHN DALE.

(President of Conference, 1902).

THE subject of this brief, imperfect sketch was born in October, 1848. His conversion, which took place when he was very young, was effected through the instrumentality of George Tippet, then "one of the most earnest and godly ministers in the Connexion." So keenly sensitive is Mr. Dale of the great spiritual change wrought in his nature through the agency of this good man, that he feels he owes him a debt of gratitude which he will never be able to repay.

In 1873 Mr. Dale became a probationer, and four years later was ordained at the Torquay Conference. Conscious of his imperfect equipment

for the work to which he was set apart, at the Conference of 1878 he requested to be released



from circuit work for one year in order to attend the Pastor's College, of which the late Mr. Spurgeon

was then president. The request was granted, and Mr. Dale had the rare privilege of spending twelve months under a capable staff of teachers—a privilege for which he has ever been grateful.

As a minister, his chief delight is in preaching the Gospel of Christ. In his message to the brethren when President of the Conference he laid special emphasis on this aspect of their work. "Let nothing," he said, "divert our attention—no question of philosophy, no postulation of criticism, no political agitation—from our supreme mission of preaching Christ and saving sinners. Our success will be according to the measure of the Spirit of God in us and in our churches." From the first he has been sensitive to the demands of the pulpit, and by diligent reading and careful preparation he has sought, to the best of his ability, to meet them. Courageous, considerate, and sincere, with a strong desire to be true to himself and to others, his public ministry has been marked with a conscientiousness which has won for him the respect and admiration of his brethren. Fearless in his expression of cherished convictions, he has not been afraid of finding himself with the minority, and more than once at the Annual Conference has he uttered sentiments which have been in direct conflict with those of the majority of the brethren. His independent attitude, however, has not been detrimental to his influence and popularity, as may be gathered from the fact that in 1902 he was elected President of Conference. Among the circuits in which he has travelled are Camelford, Falmouth and Penryn, Truro, Torquay, Neath, St. Austell, &c.

Whilst on the whole his life has been one of sunshine and peace, in 1905 he suffered an irreparable loss in the death of his devoted wife, who was ever a help meet in the highest meaning of that term. They both laboured together in the interests of the Kingdom of God, and although her labour is over, and she has entered into rest, the sweet influence of her life remains to be a comfort and an inspiration to those who knew her best.

Mr. ALFRED A. DOWNER (Jersey).

ONE of the most widely-known men in the Island of Jersey is the subject of this sketch. Born on the Island in January, 1853, during his lifetime, especially within the last quarter of a century, he has played many parts, and so well have they been executed that few would demur to the affirmation that his present position and influence have been won by sheer industry and ability. When between seventeen and eighteen years of age the limitations of the Island, and the industrial conditions which then obtained, created a sense of dissatisfaction, which impelled him to venture forth into a larger world of activity and industry. For seven years he spent the strength of his young manhood on the deep, and the experience gained in discharging the duties associated with this mode of life has not been without beneficent effects. He can enter sympathetically into the significant words of the sacred historian—"And the rest, some on boards, and

some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."

His attachment to the denomination began at



the establishing of the church at the Royal Crescent. From the first he was an active worker, his primary duties being those of organ blower. But although manifesting interest in the church in

this way, he was utterly ignorant of the spiritual verities of the New Testament, and some years elapsed ere he was awakened to the consciousness of the need of passing from death unto life. Listening to a sermon from the text, "For to me to live is Christ," he there and then asked and answered his own question, and from that period he has endeavoured to shape his conduct according to what he conceives to be the example of Christ. Since his conversion he has been an active Christian worker, and has exhibited an unfailing interest in the real welfare of the church. For several years he acted as a teacher and superintendent of the school, and is now president of the band of hope. He has filled various offices connected with the church, the trust estate, and the circuit, and on two or three occasions he has been appointed representative to the Annual Conference.

His religious life is of a healthy and robust type, finding expression in the performance of civic duties as well as in those services regarded as characteristically religious. A few years since social and moral reform of a specific character in the Island became an imperative necessity, and it was desirable it should be effected through constitutional methods and by constitutional authority. Pressed by his fellow townsmen to become a candidate for the office of centenier—a position of considerable authority and influence—reluctantly he consented, with the distinct understanding that he would not solicit personally a single vote to enable him to secure the position. The reformers, however, and those anxious for Mr. Downer's election, put forth their full strength, with the

result that he headed the poll with a large majority. Space forbids a lengthy description of what followed in the way of social reform. Suffice it that hotels, illegitimate drink shops, and brothels were raided, and vigorous and successful attempts made to purify some of the streams of social life. At the expiration of his term of office (three years) he was pressed to stand again, and having consented, he again headed the poll. For a period of six years he worked with might and main to serve the highest interests of the Island—to purify some of its polluted streams, and to cleanse its atmosphere from the miasma which in some places had made life obnoxious and unendurable.

Tall, strong, well-proportioned, and possessing a physique which would make him conspicuous in almost any company, he is an excellent specimen of Nature's finest work. In character he is independent, fearless, and just. One of the dominant features of his life is his will power, and this he exercises in many directions. The mischievous habits of years he discarded by a single effort of the will, and from that hour he has had no association with either tobacco or beer. Although appearances may not warrant the inference, those most intimately acquainted with his inner life and spirit know him to be the possessor of a tender heart and a sympathetic soul, and one ever willing to lend a helping hand to those in dire distress. To the Royal Crescent Church he and his family have rendered useful service. To it they have been more or less attached for a third of a century, and the assurance is given that never had they its highest interests more at heart than they have to-day.

Rev. WILLIAM MILLER.

MR. Miller was born in the parish of Winkleigh, Devon, on January 24th, 1849. When quite a child he attended the Sunday school at Stable Green, in the Ringsash Circuit, where his grandfather was one of the earliest members of the little society, and where also, for several years, his father was superintendent of the school, class leader, and conductor of the choir. Converted at Langham Cross when seventeen years of age, Mr. Miller was almost immediately pressed into service, and commenced work as a Sunday school teacher. When about eighteen his name was put on the plan, and having evidenced ability as a preacher he was prevailed upon to offer himself for the itinerant ministry. After spending a few months in the Weare Circuit, he was accepted as a probationer by the Conference of 1874. Chatham, Southampton, Swansea, Cardiff, Faversham, Helston, Porthleven, St. Columb, Ashford, Weare, and Somerton are some of the circuits in which he has exercised his ministry. A diligent pastor and a capable preacher, he has rendered the denomination useful service.

Mr. G. P. DYMOND, M.A. (Plymouth).

THE subject of this sketch is known throughout the denomination as one of its most loyal and devoted members. Born of Bible Christian parents, and permeated with the spirit of the denomination, he stands out

as a lay representative of distinguished ability and force of character, and a gentleman whose service to the Connexion is not unworthy to be compared with many ministers of the same age and standing. The son of the best of parents, trained amid conditions essentially religious and spiritual, he is a true son of his father, for whom he has the utmost



respect and reverence. Nature has dealt bountifully with him in the bestowment of an unusually fine physique. As a man, he is one of creation's best specimens, with massive head, equally massive frame, and a voice whose tone and timbre would be discernible in almost any average choir. Fortunately, the massiveness and strength of his

physical frame have their parallel in the soundness of his heart and the vigour of his mind. Some men—perhaps the majority—are lopsided, unevenly balanced, with a waywardness in certain directions which handicaps them in their movements towards definite ends. Not so the subject of this sketch. If the blending of the emotional with the intellectual and spiritual is not exactly perfect, it is a most delightful approximation, and when this trinity of forces is summoned by the will to assist in the delivery of an important speech, the effect is unmistakable. He has a disciplined intellect, and it is warmed and inspired by a great heart. Sometimes he allows the latter very great freedom, and then up through the eye-sockets flows liquid emotion. He is in the line of apostolic succession, and true to the best traditions of “the fathers.” Much might be said of his talents, gifts, and graces, but suffice it that these are consecrated to the highest ideals, and these in association with the church to which he owes so much, and which he loves so well. Technically “only a layman,” in the best sense he is one of the most thoughtful, devoted, and acceptable ministers in the denomination, and even beyond it.

Mr. Dymond is the eldest child in a large family. On his mother's side (says a writer in the *Free Methodist*, from which most of the following facts are taken), he is the grandson of Captain G. P. Pearse, one of a line of fine sailors belonging to Barnstaple, in which town Mr. Dymond was born on May 13th, 1864. He is an unspeakable debtor to the law of heredity, which to him has been of the most beneficent and generous kind, since to

the quiet strength and beauty of his mother's character, supplemented with the devout spirit and Christian life of his saintly father, he owes much of those qualities of mind and heart which have given him prominence among men.

His early years were spent in London, Torquay, and Jersey. At the last-named place he was the pupil of Mr. E. Saunders, and here the first steps were taken up the ladder of educational acquirement and distinction. On returning to England he went to Shebbear College, where he attained such proficiency that at the end of four years he was head pupil. He was then appointed as assistant master at the college, and gradually worked his way up to the position of second master. He matriculated at London University in the year 1880, with the Rev. H. W. Horwill, a fellow student, both being a month over sixteen, the minimum age. For some years after matriculation he studied for the Higher Civil Service. He had not yet definitely decided as to his life's vocation, but it was being determined for him, and the wisdom of his ultimate decision to remain in the teaching profession has been confirmed by subsequent years.

He remained at Shebbear for thirteen and a-half years, and those years have ever since been held in grateful memory. He cherishes a deep admiration for Mr. T. Ruddle, B.A., headmaster of the college. He owes much also to the late Rev. John Gammon, governor of the college, whose saintly life and wise counsels had much to do with moulding and directing the spiritual life of the young student. Mr. Dymond left Shebbear in

1888, and, in all the ardour and freshness of his young manhood, came to Plymouth to take the position of headmaster at the Hoe Grammar School. Since that time the school has greatly prospered. The number of its pupils has risen from thirty to one hundred and twenty-five, and its reputation for successful work is widening year by year.

His own educational position and honours are of the highest order, and have been won, not so much by brilliance of gift, as by steady, persistent, indefatigable industry and perseverance. He has seen in vision the shining uplands, and by a sure and steadfast climb has scaled their summits. While still at Shebbear he was eighth of his year in Latin Honours at Intermediate Arts. He graduated B.A. at London in 1891, and M.A. at the same university in 1903. He throws himself into every kind of educational work with zest and delight. It is the centre round which his activities revolve, the goal of ambition and desire. He has been secretary, treasurer, and president of the Plymouth and District Branch of the Teachers' Guild, and hon. secretary of the Oxford Local Examinations at the Plymouth Centre since 1892. He is a member of the London University Committee at Plymouth, and is president of the Private Schools' Association, besides being a lecturing member of the Plymouth Institution. His lecture on "Sidelights on American Education" was published in the *Teachers' Guild Quarterly* for December, 1904. In his own school work he is ably assisted by Mr. John Rounsefell, B.A., B.Sc., who has been senior assistant for sixteen years.

Notwithstanding the multiplicity of his daily

duties, Mr. Dymond finds much time for definite Christian service. He commenced work as a local preacher at an early age, and still renders valuable service in that capacity, in addition to which he is president of the Men's Meetings held every Sunday afternoon in the Plymouth Corn Exchange, under the auspices of the local Free Church Council. An ever loyal son of the denomination, he loves the church of his fathers, glories in her traditions, and gives himself without reserve to serve her interests. In the Plymouth Circuit he is esteemed and beloved by all, and has contributed not a little to its consolidation and advancement. He has filled the offices of circuit steward, Sunday school superintendent, &c., and even the East Street choir is not complete without him.

For many years he has served the larger life of the Connexion by exercising his judgment on the Executive Committee and at the sessions of the Annual Conference. Since 1890 he has been a member of the Examining Committee. In 1901 he attended as a delegate the Methodist Ecumenical Conference in City Road Chapel, London. He is also a member of the Joint Committee on Methodist Union, being in perfect sympathy with the proposed union of the three denominations now negotiating. His vision and service, however, are not merely parochial, limited to the narrow bounds of his own church and people. Catholic in his sympathies and views, he manifests interest in the religious life of the nation, and co-operates in service in the common cause of the Free Evangelical Churches, which he serves with energy and ability. A few years since he was President of the South Devon

and East Cornwall Federation of Free Churches.

A strong man, and still in manhood's prime, Christian service, larger and wider than has yet been attempted, remains for Mr. Dymond to accomplish, and should Nature still continue to be gracious in the preservation of his physical and mental powers, no doubt can be cherished as to the beneficence of his influence in those causes which have such a large place in both his head and heart.

Rev. WILLIAM HILL.

THE subject of this sketch has the distinction of being a son of one of the pioneers of the denomination—the Rev. William Hill, who was a man of fine physique, commanding presence, and of considerable mental capacity, but of a retiring disposition. It is reported that his passion for work was of such a character, that he practically wore himself out in arduous labours in the opening and extension of new mission stations. Of his many notable achievements in this direction, probably the most significant was the saving of the Botley Mission, now the Southampton Circuit, from extinction. In his wife, whose maiden name was Jane Bray, he had a helpmeet indeed, since she was one of the early female preachers, who rendered the denomination such acceptable and praiseworthy service.

Born at Aveton Gifford, then forming part of the South Devon Mission, William Hill the Second

was from the first ensphered with an atmosphere thoroughly penetrated with a religious spirit, and it was not unnatural, therefore, that early in life he should give evidence of piety and devotion, and rapidly develop into a decided Christian. At the



age of sixteen he became a local preacher, and in 1875 entered upon the work of the ministry. The circuits in which he has travelled are Crondall, Falmouth and Penryn, Aberavon, Faversham, Sevenoaks, Forest of Dean, Newton Abbot, Sun-

derland, and Bridgwater. In these spheres he has rendered faithful, conscientious service, and won for himself the respect and esteem of those capable of appreciating such qualities of heart and mind as are conspicuous in his character as a minister of the Gospel. That he is brilliant as a preacher or platform speaker none would care to affirm, and he himself would be the last to accept such a compliment. He neither flashes nor thunders, but is quiet, meditative, solid. Fireworks are alien to his spirit and temperament, and in their use he never indulges. He is the possessor of spiritual perception and judgment, and his verdict on a sermon or speech is always worth soliciting. Although rarely heard as a preacher at Conference, his printed discourses are worth perusing, since they possess a literary quality not always discoverable in sermons, even from popular preachers.

With two sons in the ministry—one in the Methodist Episcopal Church of America, and the other in England with the United Methodist Free Church—the succession of preachers is likely to be continued for some time. Two daughters are also engaged as evangelists with the United Free Methodists, whilst the youngest daughter conducts missions in connection with our own and other denominations. With Mrs. Hill active in the Sunday school and in general circuit work, and the father and children proclaiming the Gospel from various pulpits, both in England and America, the family may be designated a “band of preachers,” serving the highest interests of the Kingdom of Christ.

Mr. RICHARD SPRATLING (Faversham).

THE parents of Mr. Spratling being associated with the Primitive Methodists at Faversham, his earlier years were spent in connection with this body. But at the age of thirteen he expressed a desire to join the Bible Christians at Abbey Place, influenced by motives, however, not of the highest character. His father raising no objection, hoping the lad would receive some good by the transfer, young Spratling joined the school at Abbey Place during the pastorate of the late Rev. Samuel Jory. Thirty years have passed since that step was taken, and much has happened. In the schoolroom at Abbey Place, when yet in his teens, young Spratling sought and found the Saviour, and although his experience during the critical period of young manhood is much like that of many others, he remains to-day a steadfast follower of the Christ whom he loved in his tender years. For much that is best in his early Christian experience he owes an infinite debt to that lover of young men, the late Mr. David Wise.

In 1889, when his father was called up higher, he commenced to feel the mystery of life and of death, and became somewhat perplexed; but the tender sympathy of the late Rev. James Hender comforted and supported him. In 1895 he was appointed junior circuit steward, and in 1896 there arose in his heart a desire for a richer Christian experience. Some plain talk on the part of a friend stirred him to the depths, and he resolved to climb the heights. He returned to the school

as a worker, and in 1902, on the retirement of Mr. L. Savin, he was appointed assistant superintendent. In 1903 Mr. James Kirkman—a lover of God and all good causes, as loyal a supporter as any minister could desire—felt constrained, after thirty-three years' devoted, self-sacrificing service,



to retire. Realising that Mr. Kirkman had won the rest he desired, Mr. Spratling consented to succeed him, and is now the superintendent of the school.

Mr. Spratling is senior circuit steward, and during recent years has represented the circuit at

the District Meeting and Conference. Attendance at these gatherings has not only resulted to him in great spiritual blessing, but has increased and intensified his interest in Christian service, especially in relation to his own church and denomination. Faversham circuit has been the centre of much profitable work, and from within its limited circle have gone forth men who are maintaining, in various parts of the world, its best and noblest traditions.

Rev. JOHN NINNIS.

MR. Ninnis was born near Helston, November 16th, 1855. His conversion took place at fourteen years of age, and was effected by the united instrumentalities of home influence, Sunday school, and evangelistic services. When eighteen years of age it was decided to place his initials on the circuit plan, and the first appointment was taken March, 1874. In September, 1875, he was employed as a hired local preacher, and at the Conference of 1876 was accepted as a probationer. He was ordained at Bristol in 1880, and though much the younger of the ministers received, was, on the recommendation of the Examining Committee, accorded the first position.

At this Conference he was appointed to the Aberavon Circuit, residing at Neath. As the circuit was worked sectionally, it presented good opportunities for initiative and experience in circuit

management. These were soon seized, and a forward movement was begun in the opening of Glynecorwg, a growing township among the hills, with no English place of worship, and wherein were scores of people who had not attended a



religious gathering for ten or more years. The first services were held in a cottage, and attracted much attention. Numbers of the inhabitants signed the pledge, gave themselves to God, and a school and church were formed. In a little

over two years the chapel was built, the foundation stone being laid by Mrs. Ninnis a few months before her marriage. The church ever since has enjoyed remarkable prosperity, and indirectly through this extension three other village churches have been opened in the locality. At present, out of the six places comprising the Aberavon Circuit, four of them are in the neighbourhood of Glynorrwg. A new chapel is about to be erected, towards which there are some hundreds of pounds in hand. In 1883 Mr. Ninnis was invited to Holsworthy, where he stayed three years as second minister, and accepted a unanimous invitation to remain the fourth year as pastor of the circuit. At this time the important extension at Greenbank, Plymouth, was being made, and as an extra minister was needed, the Conference of 1886 sent him to Plymouth. His work more especially was to have direct oversight of Zion Street, the mother church. When Greenbank was opened nearly 100 members were transferred to the new church, and Zion Street was left much emptied and with very imperfect accommodation. Soon the chapel was re-seated, and new galleries erected at a cost of £460, and all met by donations and offerings. Near the close of the four years pastorate the new schoolroom, classrooms, and orchestra were built. The missionary receipts went up to £80, and the saving power of God was so abundant that, in some respects, Zion Street was as strong, and in others stronger, than before Greenbank was opened.

In 1890 Mr. Ninnis went to Bristol, taking charge of Gladstone Street Church. In the first year the beautiful new schoolroom was erected,

and the chapel improved by the addition of galleries and an organ chamber. Following this a tract agency was organised. Over forty persons delivered about 750 tracts per week. This bore splendid fruit—the school and congregation increased, and the church exhibited unprecedented signs of life. In 1894 Mr. Ninnis accepted an invitation to Penzance. Here again he served the full term, during which time the seat rents of the town church increased from £59 to £84, and the membership from 150 to 230. In 1898 the pastorate of Torquay was entered upon. Here the finances improved, souls were saved, and the Ellacombe Mission opened. During his stay Mr. Ninnis was Vice-President of the Free Church Council, and President of the Torquay and District Christian Endeavour Union.

From Torquay he went to Devonport. Here were serious problems awaiting solution, debts to be removed, and new buildings to be erected. The heavy debt on St. George's Road was reduced £145 per year, and Haddington Road School premises extended and paid for. The membership, Sunday schools, and missionary monies were taken to a record point. Addressing himself to what seemed to be the most serious case, that of Torpoint extension, seemingly insuperable difficulties were overcome, and a fine new church was built in a rapidly growing district. After raising about £330 for this extension, and leaving a good prospect of a flourishing school, church, and congregation, Mr. Ninnis passed on by invitation to Millom, the premier circuit of the Bradford District, and the south-west capital of Lakeland, where he is doing

excellent work, and where his pulpit efforts attract people of all denominations. With this appointment he was elected superintendent of the district.

The subject of this sketch prides himself on being pre-eminently a "circuit man." Official life has no attraction for him. He seldom attends the Conference as a member. His services have been appreciated, and much in demand. He has often been congratulated on his appointments to circuits, and on the successful manner in which he has done his work. On leaving his stations he has always received one or more invitations to other spheres. With strong missionary sympathies, a deep interest in young people, and a full belief in the evangelistic note, his ministry is both popular and useful. The *Bristol Christian Leader*, reviewing his work when leaving that city, described him as "a good all-round man," which is echoed in all the stations on which he has laboured.

Messrs. WILLIAM JAMES and JOHN MATTHEWS

(MILLOM, CUMBERLAND).

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WHILST mention could be rightly made of the late Henry and Thomas Sobey, C. Bartle, and of some others still engaged for Christ and the church in various places, no two men have done so much for the establishment of the Bible Christian Connexion in Cumberland as the two brethren named above.

As they are still with us and actively engaged in church work, it is due that they should have some notice here.

Mr. WILLIAM JAMES was born in the parish of St. Bryan, September, 1834, and is therefore just over seventy-one years of age. Before leaving his



home society at St. Just he was employed as assistant class leader, seat steward, and Sunday school teacher. He became a local preacher in 1867, and continued that work until failure in health a short time since made it necessary that he should cease public speaking. At half-past eight

every Sunday morning he meets his class, teaches in the Sunday school in the afternoon, and prays with great power in the evening prayer meeting. The revival is his element. He sings with great heartiness many of the revival hymns so much used in Cornwall forty years ago. What nearly everybody in Cornwall has forgotten he remembers, and reproduces, to the amazement of many. He has served as circuit steward, and for over twenty years has been a regular reader of the *Bible Christian Magazine*.

Mr. JOHN MATTHEWS was born at St. Just, February 5th, 1838, and is therefore about sixty-eight years of age. In the St. Just Society he served as Sunday school teacher, seat steward, and class leader. In the Millom Circuit he has filled the office of circuit steward, held the position of superintendent of the school for many years, and has been trustee steward and treasurer from the time of the opening of the chapel. He watches over the property as though it were his own, keeps the accounts with great accuracy, and in the general administration of affairs shows the mind of a statesman. From the time of his conversion, nearly forty-four years ago, without a break he has taken the *Bible Christian Magazine*. Still it is eagerly looked for and welcomed, especially if it has several pages devoted to the China Mission.

But the manner in which these two brethren have kept and worked together is most remarkable. They were converted in the same revival. The Rev. William (now General) Booth was the missionary, though the influence of the Rev. James

Stoyel was a most helpful factor in bringing them to decision. They held offices side by side in the same church for some years. In June, 1866, they left together for the North of England and came to Dalton-in-Furness. They worked together in



the same mine, and together joined the Primitive Methodist Church.

After spending two and a-half years at Dalton-in-Furness they came to Millom together, worked in the Hodbarrow Iron Ore Mines, joined the Primitives again, and lived in the same house for

several years. In 1870 and 1871, when the first Bible Christian agents were sent, and steps were taken to establish the denomination, they stood together, saw the society formed, and the chapel built. They still meet in the same class, hold responsible positions in the church, and are both deeply interested and highly respected. However monotonous it may appear, all through these long years and manifold experiences not an angry word has passed between them. The society and circuit are proud of their Jonathan and David.—(J. N.)

Mr. WALTER JAMES MOSS (Faversham).

MR. Moss was born at Faversham on December 25th, 1866. At an early age he joined the Sunday school at Abbey Place, passing during the years from one class to another, until he was appointed teacher. The godly band of men who were then associated with the church greatly influenced his life, and during the ministry of the late Rev. T. P. Oliver he decided to become a Christian. From that time he became interested in the work of the church, and for several years was secretary of the Mutual Improvement Society. In 1889 he became local preacher, but in consequence of the heavy demands upon his time and energy during the week, he was unable to undertake many preaching appointments on Sundays. Married in 1893, about ten years later the lives thus united were separated by death.

The building of the new church at Stone Street imposed a large amount of labour upon Mr. Moss, who was then trustee secretary. He threw himself heartily into the scheme for erecting the new pre-



mises in Stone Street, and gave liberally from his own private purse. For many years he acted as senior circuit steward, and only relinquished the position on leaving the town for another sphere of labour.

In 1903 Mr. Moss took considerable interest in the establishment of an Adult Sunday School in Faversham. Undertaking at first the work of secretary, he was subsequently elected president. On surrendering this office the members of the class testified their appreciation of his services by presenting him with an illuminated address. He received a testimonial also from the church in Stone Street.

Although now cut off geographically from his own church, his sympathies are still with the denomination to which he owes so much, and these he expresses in practical ways when occasion requires. His one regret is that he is not able to worship with his own people. Born and trained a Bible Christian, he loves its fellowship, and delights in participating in its glad thanksgivings.

